

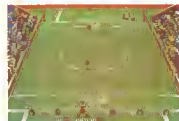
# ACE

## MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

ST ■ AMIGA ■ C64 ■  
CPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ PC  
NINTENDO ■ SEGA ■

### ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

# COIN-OP KILLERS



Original games  
fight back

## VOYAGER

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## GRAND MONSTER SLAM

◀ Fantasy action from Golden Goblins

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Kiad regains to the EMAP assize

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### GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS.....24

Compact disc storage in conjunction with new hardware will lead to real video action in computer games. We check out the hardware and find out who's developing what...

### PLAYING ROLES.....90

Steve Cooke takes an overview of Role Playing games on computer, in the RPG-uide, starting this month.



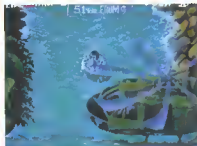
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### UP AND COMING.....14-20

Ace goes on the road to Amsterdam on Page 14, takes the pick of the Previews, on Page 18, then trucks on down to System 3 to see what's going on...

### ARCADE ACE.....22

Our intrepid console flier Andrew Smith takes a look at Atari II and Saint Dragon, two hot new arcade entries



### SCREEN TEST.....35

Pages and pages of reviews, crammed this month with a plethora of original titles. Is the con-op conversion doomed? Not yet, but a new wave of original software is sweeping in. However, T-T-Scanner leads the con-op fightback this month...

### SCREENTEST SUPPLEMENT.....63

It's straight into the TNT section for power players this month, then on to Updates on new versions of existing releases and a quick peek at the Budget world...

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Get that ghetto blaster gleaming, shine up that HiFi, overhaul that Walkman, Radio ACE has arrived for your edification and amazement - and it's all in glorious stereophonic sound.

# Radio ACE

Tune it to the soundtracks of hit games reviewed this issue, listen to the ACE chart rundown, find out what Rob Hubbard's latest composition sounds like, check out the history of computer music, eavesdrop on CD ROM Defender of the Crown, prick up your ears to the Radio Ace Aural Competition and listen to the first Reader's Composition, sent in by John Walther after he heard the Making Music feature last issue. Wheel! You'll have to put your ears on a diet after they've feasted on Radio Ace.



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PLUS a host of goodies from entertainment giants Virgin Ha

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"...there will be a massive shakeout in the industry. Costs will rocket, games will become multi-million dollar productions..."

Find out why. Page .....24

## TRICKS 'N' TACTICS .....63

Graced with the presence of Mike Singleton, TNT's main attraction this month is the first instalment of a special two-part playing guide to 8-bit War In Middle Earth, giving the low-down on all things Hobbitry and Orc-like.

Meanwhile on the 16-bit front, there's a special coaching session on TV Sports Football, and some extremely useful tips on how to get going with FORT. All this, plus a goldmine of information for the discerning - but unscrupulous - games player!

## ADVENTURES .....88

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It has been a busy month. New labels have been launched, new hardware announced and Telecomsoft is about to go to a new owner. Find out all about it

### LETTERS .....12

The usual mix of prizes and opinions.

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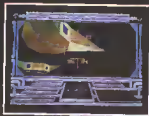
Jon Bales gets to grips with sequencers; whatever your machine, there's no reason for not making sweet music.

## IN THE PINK

In the Pink Pages this month, the editor goes slightly mad, handy tips for computer gaming, featuring the fabulous Binocams; completion results; more news of Play by Mail games, a full MicroProse soccer report; plus puzzles, cross-words, surprises, Nigel from Nigel, N Gar Zhembo, and (eventually) the final frontier in the form of the Blitter End.



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# THE SEGA SYSTEM

Hardware, software and useful non-computer clobber is all on offer. Page 33





# S. CHECK OUT THE GAMES.



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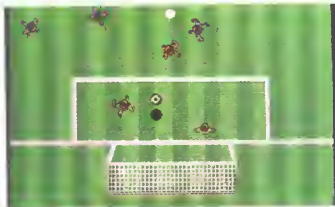
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# MicroProse Soccer



players, strips, strength of banana kicks and an action replay when a goal is scored are all excellent finishing touches to an already brilliant game. Overall, MicroProse Soccer has to be the definitive football simulation — be there for the kick off!

MicroProse shocked everybody when they released MicroProse Soccer for the C64. Not only had they produced a non-militaristic product, they had done it with such expertise that MicroProse Soccer has become an instant classic on that format. Now, MicroProse have released the sixteen-bit version. Just how do they compare with the original version? Read on.

The simulation provides both indoor and outdoor action with American rules six-a-side and standard eleven-a-side respectively. The time for each game can be varied between 2 and 12 minutes. Players may play against each other or one play against the computer. Selection of your team in the World Cup Competition is crucial, as it is in real life — it is much easier to win if you are a historically good footballing nation, such as Brazil than if you are Oman or Algeria. Conversely, if you get too good, you could try taking on the might of West Germany with yourself playing as Poland. Other control options allow for extremely varied games, with effects, such as, rain, thunder, overhead kicks and banana shots coming into play.

You are presented, on kick-off, with a lock-down view — not a common one, but one that works well. On the 16-bit versions, you get no-holds barred, full screen, 8-way scrolling (so smooth!). Control your player nearest the ball with your joystick, using the firebutton to kick the ball in the



direction your player is facing. The position of the joystick when kicking the ball determines the path that the ball takes, such as, high lob, banana kicks and overhead kicks. Recapture possession of the ball with a sliding tackle (the wetter the pitch, the longer the slide!). Should the opposition get within range, you gain control of your goalkeeper to prevent the inevitable shot from reaching the back of the net.

Throw-ins, corners and goal kicks all play their part in the game. Attention to detail is one of MicroProse's hall marks and MicroProse Soccer has not been left wanting in any respect. The colour of the

C & VG Game of the Month — 95%  
‘Undoubtedly the best football game ever produced — miss it at your peril!’  
C & VG

Zzap Sizzler — 90%  
‘One of the best soccer sims I’ve ever seen. Little touches like the rain on the pitch and banana shots really make it something special.’

Zzap  
TGM Star Player — 89%  
‘MicroProse Soccer is of the highest quality — its fact action makes it far more playable than other soccer games.’

## RELEASE SCHEDULE

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SPEC +3	OUT NOW	£14.95
AMSTRAD	OUT NOW	£14.95 cd £19.95 dk
ATARI ST	NEW	£24.95
IBM PC	SOON	£TBA
C64/128	OUT NOW	£14.95 cs £19.95 dk

## RATING OUT OF TEN

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
STRATEGY	9
PLAYABILITY	9
OVERALL RATING	9



**MICROPROSE**  
ESTABLISHED 1982



- Console competition heats up
- MicroProse launch new labels
- Rob Hubbard: where is he now?

# ACE NEWS

## AWASH WITH CONSOLES...

Atari's 6502-based console, the 7800, should arrive in British shops in the next month or so backed by a comprehensive range of games from the likes of Electronic Arts, Activision and Epyx. Compatible with cartridges for its little brother, the 2600 console, the 7800 offers rather more sparkling graphics: 16 graphics modes are available to programmers, and they can be mixed 'n' matched just about every which way, according to a technical spokesman from Atari.

At the moment, games are being converted from American NTSC versions so that they will run on the PAL system to be sold in the UK, but new original games have already been commissioned from a software house in the north west of England. A team of ex Imagine programmers have apparently contracted to produce six original games per year. Classic 7800 titles already available in the States include *Summer Games*, *Winter Games*, *Commando*, *Impossible Mission*, *Balblazer*, *Super Huey* and *Choplifter*. Per-

haps the most interesting title in the lineup is a game called *Tower Toppler*, polished in America on the US Gold label. UK gamers will already know it as *Nebulus*, from Hewson.

The 7800 has reached the number two slot in America according to our source within Atari, overtaking the Sega in the race for console domination which has already been soundly won by Nintendo. Over 11 million 8-bit Nintendos have been sold in the States, and these days one in five American households owns a Nintendo console.

Atari refused to name firm prices for the 7800 and its software as we went to press, but the console is likely to sell for less than £80 - probably £69.99 - and cartridges are likely to weigh in at £12.95 or £14.95 depending on the complexity of the game they contain.

### HAND HELD ACTION

Rumours arrive from Japan that Nintendo plan to launch their 16-

bit response to the 16-bit Sega later this year, although it is unlikely to reach British shores before 1990 at the earliest: there's still plenty of room yet for 8-bit Nintendo sales over here as it is. A handheld Nintendo console is also rumoured to be in the offing, but only in Japan for the time being.

Not to be outdone, the Americans are working on a hand-held games machine. Rumours have been circulating for some while that Epyx have been planning a console that bridges the gap between hand-held games machines and the 'traditional' console. According to industry trade paper CTW, Epyx have confirmed that their new machine will be unveiled at the June CES Show in Chicago, and while Epyx are not yet releasing

any technical details, the unit should go on sale in America during July this year for less than \$150, which would indicate a sub-£100 price for a UK launch. Founder and director of Epyx, John Blazier, has confirmed that

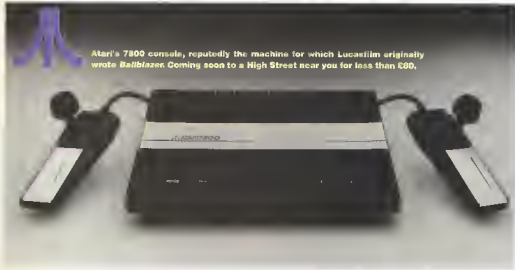
the machine is due to arrive on these shores in time for Christmas next year...

Finally, a CES launch could well be on the cards for the American version of the PC Engine: and if the Engine is indeed launched in the States later this year, leading

American software developers are likely to start producing games for both the Engine and its CD-ROM drive. Further news on the direction games design is taking with the impending arrival of CD ROM drives in the home can be found this month in our CD feature.



The 16-bit Sega Genesis: soon to have a Nintendo 16-bit rival...



Atari's 7800 console, reputedly the machine for which Lucasfilm originally wrote *Balblazer*. Coming soon to a High Street near you for less than £80.

## GOLD AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW

German software publishing group Rainbow Arts has severed its links with US Gold and is to go it alone in the UK market from now on. Grand Monster Slam, the first title to be published solo in Britain, is reviewed this month and should be in the shops under the Golden Gobins label by the time you read this. Rainbow Arts is currently pondering the price point at which it will be entering the market: their

games will be full price, but whether that means £15, £20 or £25 in the case of 16-bit product remains to be decided.

Next off the Golden Gobins line should be Circus Attractions, due later this month, and then Spherical is due before June. Flip back to the March issue for full details of what to expect from the Rainbow Arts group of companies over the coming months.

Juggling is just one of the events in **Circus Attractions**, due soon from **Rainbow Arts**.



## LIGHT FANTASTIC

In a novel deal with hardware manufacturer Amstrad, the Mastertronic arm of Virgin Mastertronic is poised to launch a new light gun for the Spectrum Plus machines and Amstrad CPC range of computers. A Commodore 64 version of the £29.95 gun is also being contemplated, but no firm decision has yet been taken on the C64 front. The unit should be available in the next few weeks, and arrives bundled with six games: final details of the titles are currently being bed up, ready for the launch. Other software houses will be invited to write games that support the peripheral.

The Virgin Mastertronic light gun, which will definitely be available for the Spectrum Plus and Amstrad, and might cater for the C64 as well.

## NO DUNGEON ON THE A500



FTL have finally admitted defeat in the quest to produce a version of the ST classic *Dungeon Master* for the Amiga 500. They simply can't fit the code into an unenhanced Amiga, and feel that the reduction in the cost of memory enhancements, combined with the increase in demand for 1 Meg games, means that it's not worth compromising. More and more people are upgrading their machines, thus coming within range of the full Amiga implementation.

"Any effort to reduce the size or complexity of the game would result in a product wholly unacceptable to FTL Games" is the official line, so A500 *Dungeon Master* has been aborted. Sad news for A500 owners, who won't be able to enjoy the original game



or the imminent Chaos upgrade which adds new dungeons and quests to the original game.

*Dungeon Master II* is currently underway at FTL's Amsterdam HQ and will be published in Britain by Mirrorsoft in due course. Meanwhile, for full details of the latest Imageworks, Caramware, FTL and Spectrum Holobyte products, check out the 'ACE On The Road in Amsterdam' feature that appears on Page 14.

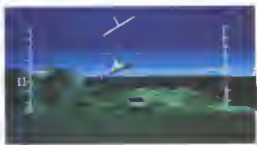
## FOFT UPGRADE UNDERWAY

Following reviews which marked the ST version of *Federation Of Free Traders* as flawed, Gremlin are taking steps to ensure that the Amiga version is as polished as possible. "Everything is there in the ST version" the Gremlin supremo Ian Stewart kindly explains, "but we just got a little too close to the game during development. We're actively taking note of the critics while preparing the Amiga version."

Gremlin are working on a sub-manual that includes a start-up guide to FOFT and will accompany the existing FOFT documentation

in the Amiga packaging. Once the Amiga version has been tweaked and released, ST owners will be able to acquire the ST 'FOFT remix' and a copy of the supplementary manual by sending their original FOFT disk to Gremlin with £1 to cover P&P costs.

Meanwhile, if you're having a bit of difficulty getting the most out of FOFT, take a peek at the 'Tracks 'N' Tactics' section this month, and remember, Gremlin have a full helpline service on 0742 753423. As soon as the ST disk exchange service comes into being, we'll let you know.



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## MICROPROSE EXPANDS HORIZONS

Two New Labels Launched and Telecomsoft Acquired



Honde RVF Biking, in the first release from new label MicroStyle.

As we went to press with this issue, MicroProse and British Telecom had apparently reached agreement in principle over the sale of Telecomsoft's three labels, Rainbow, Firebird and Silverbird. No firm details were available, but it is rumoured that the Virgin/Mastertronic group might well acquire rights to the Telecomsoft back catalogue for budget release from MicroProse while the main labels Rainbow and Firebird transfer to MicroProse. Further details are as when they become available.

Whatever comes of the Telecomsoft deal, MicroProse is clearly gearing up for some serious expansion. A deal has been signed with Hewson under which MicroProse

will release the cream of the Hewson arcade crop in America, while back in England the Prose people will be dealing with incentives 16-bit marketing as well as releasing Universal Military Simulator II: Nations at War, Incentives Dark Side and Total Eclipse are due out later this month on a brand new label - MicroStyle - under which MicroProse plans to release games that require a bit of horsepower to complete. Complementary to the MicroStyle label is MicroStyle, set to feature super-slick shoot-em-ups Xenophobe, Rainbow Warrior and RVF, a Honda motorbike simulation, are raring to go any day now. More details in the Previews section...

# ROB HUBBARD

★ INTERVIEW

FEATURED IN  
Radio ACE

For over two years Rob Hubbard held sway over the C64 music scene, with public adulation and a fair number of awards under his belt. Then, without so much as a fond farewell, he disappeared practically without trace. ACE spoke to Rob in Foster City, California about his sudden exit...



"I had been doing C64 and other eight-bit stuff for some time, and the ST was just starting to happen when I spoke to Mark Lewis, the head of Electronic Arts UK. He expressed an interest in my doing some sounds for them, and arranged a visit to the States for a few months, which I enjoyed immensely. I came back to Britain for a while, but when EA offered me a permanent position I took it."

Since he had a stranglehold on the computer music scene in Britain, Rob's decision to pack it all in and move to America may have seemed strange to his many fans, but Rob confides his motives at the time: "I was starting to get a bit bored with the eight-bit computers, simply doing the same sort of thing but on different machines. I wanted to experiment more and America is really at the forefront of technology."

"It's a different market over here: the main machines are IBM compatibles, some C64, a bit of Amiga and a bit of Apple II GS. I first started on the Tandy IBM, writing a digitised sound routine for the Tandy's four-wave sound chip."

"The main problem I have now is supporting all the non-standard sound boards for the PC, which include the Ad Lib, CMS (Creative Music System), Roland MT-32 (a 32-voice generator - Rob's favourite), and the Music Feature Card, not to mention a number of digital to analogue converters. There are also rumours of two new sound boards which employ the Amiga's sound chip and the C64's trusty SID."

"To get around this, I now compose music using the Voyetra package on a PC, and store all the tracks as MIDI files. I have a different MIDI driver for each different sound board, and when the program detects specific hardware, it simply loads the correct driver overlay from disk and then uses the single MIDI file through the driver."

"The big advantage of this is that it saves so much time only having to produce one music file: and it's also quicker to compose on a synth than in here!"

So what of plans for the future? Rob, like everyone else, is waiting for the optical disk revolution to happen: "EA have a Philips CDI machine - which is one of about three in the country - and there are already a number of formats, with CDI, DW, the PC Engine CD-ROM, the Tandy read/write optical disk system and the NeXT machine which is a 68000 machine with read/write CD drive. The beauty of all these is that they're ADPCM-based: I can simply record to disk like a normal CD."

"Although I am now able to write using conventional synthesizers, the real challenge is doing clever things with the software, I'm already trying to create intelligent interactive music on the PC, as a precursor to the arrival of truly interactive games. For instance, I'll write a backing track that plays continually, and then as the action heats up, I'll overlay other voices to space up the soundtrack accordingly, and vice versa. This technique is featured in my latest project, an interactive storytelling/adventure project for the PC."

Until CDI hits these shores for Rob to reappear in 1991, when his visa runs out anyone who wants to sample Rob's recent work can listen to the Hubbard soundtrack on Kings Of The Beach from EA (best heard on a Tandy 1000 SX or TX), or catch a snippet of his latest music on the Radio Ace cassette.



# ACE LETTERS

Time for some new topics old tight-wad decreed, pausing only to offer a measly #25 in prizes this month. And that to an oppressed minority! If you want to try to 'prize' open the Editor's wallet, get your missives in the post:

**ACE LETTERS 4 Queen Street Bath Avon BA1 1EJ.**

## MONEY FOR VALUE?

Why is it when you buy software for the Amiga or ST it comes in a box big enough to get ten disks in, let alone one? Also when you open the box you have to dig through piles of adverts and books to find the disk.

When I buy software all I want is a box big enough to store the disk and information on what keys to press to make it work. Also the screen shots on some of these boxes have not the slightest thing to do with what's inside.

After digging through the adverts and other assorted bits of paper, all I see! The manual. No, it's not the manual - it's a book about the life story of the sprites on the screen.

I say cut down on novellas, cut down on other assorted junk, and cut down on software prices.

**C A Shew, Ilford**

Firm. And there was everyone thinking that novellas, posters and other goodies in the box made the software all the more worth owning. Have the marketing men got it all wrong?

**GK**

Time and time again you hear people moaning and groaning about the price of software. If the software is too expensive, why do they buy the computer in the first place? If someone else bought it for them, they must have asked for it.

I used to own a Spectrum Plus Two with over 370 games, and out of all of them I didn't have one copy. All my miles had between 25 and 100 copies because they said the price was too high.

Now I own a Saga which I have had for a very short time. The games cost between £15 and

£30, and all the games I have played have been worth it.

Why does everyone moan. Are games really expensive?

**Daniel Worl, Kent**

Not so far as most software houses are concerned, that's fairly clear. But 370 original Spectrum games, even if most of them were budget titles or freebies with magazines, represents a large investment. Not everyone could afford such a collection of games.

Meaning about the price of software and greedy software houses does no good, I agree, and is generally unjustified.

No matter how little spare cash you've got to spend on games, pricy is no solution to wanting more software than you can afford. It's theft, every bit as much as lifting your pockets without paying down at the shops. The trick is to buy games more selectively - and there's no reason why two friends shouldn't exchange original copies of games (providing it is a genuine swap and backup copies aren't held onto).

**OK**

## FIGHTING PLAN

Dinner on lunch hour four of us decided to pop into an amusement arcade near our working place in Central London. Inside we were very surprised to find that, other than a female cashier supplying change, there was absolutely no sign of even the slightest female games-playing fanatic.

Could it be that the average British male has found something which is more appealing than the ever-so-average (but elegant) British female?

The next day, a visit to Virgin Records confirmed our suspicions - the compiler department was infested with the male-only species of the human race. Not even one

short mini-skirt and lacy black tights attracted their attention.

So that's it then, in the not-too-distant future, men MAY drop women for the joystick, MAY get the computer to make the dinner, or men MAY say 'not tonight darling, I've got a computer' to fading wives. These four office girls known as the Brooke St babies WILL fight to bring females into the arcades, females into computer games stores and females back into the British home as the NO 1 interest of the British male.

How? Easy, by playing games ourselves.

**Janet, Anita, Susan and Chaznin, London**

Best of luck! And for the time being, that closes the debate on women and computing. Time for a new topic.

## POSITIVE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE?

I'm not only a parent, but also a Foster Parent. In view of this, please would you omit my name and address if you print this letter.

In reference to Adam Morley's letter about shoot-em-ups having little or no effect on the majority - this opinion can be reinforced here, I hope. I have in my care a 9-year-old boy who has had a very disturbed start to his life. Having the need to monitor him at various times in various activities, brought forward many observations.

We recently purchased an Amstrad CPC 464 for the three children in our home. The inner aggressions and turmoils our little totter boy has had locked away, and which even a qualified therapist was unable to unlock, were released through the hackens, shootems, blast-ems etc etc he played.

My message is this. Let the do gooders experience the problems that many normal parents face from day to day. A computer

## ON THE SPOT

This letter has a strange purpose. This purpose is to ask Sandra Vogel, who is one of the unspoken-for women computer users to refrain from making references to 'spotty 14-year-old boys'. I happen to be, unfortunately, one of these boys and it can be very unpleasant to have an unpleasant fact of life like spots used almost as a form of abuse.

Us spotty 14-year-old boys do not write letters complaining about the waste of space given to the modern, galspoken woman who wants to make his views on software targeting known.

And the answer to Sandra Vogel's question the reason that games are male orientated is that many more boys play games than women. And what do the software companies want to do? They want to make money, and they do this by targeting their games to the average or most common user - BOYS.

**James Ball, Chester**

Another minority offended and now defended. Resisting the urge to mention spot prizes, glossing over new complexioners that may have been put on the matter, there's just time to apologise to Mr Ball and any other similarly offended readers and attempt to make up for the visit with a voucher for £25 worth of software...

**PRIZE  
LETTER**

tucked away in a bedroom is quite often a damn good pressure release for many a family friction. Mind your business, and let people who really know mind theirs

#### A Foster Parent

#### WEALTHY HORMONES

The unfortunate thing with censorship is that the voice of reason is always drowned out by the moral minority

Girls get upset about sexy pictures because they are being used as objects, and I get upset as I am being treated like a bag of hormones with money. I find girls attractive, but using the female form and my own liking for the same degrades not only women but me as well

Which is why censorship cannot be left to a profit making company or to the consumer. It must be in the hands of an independent body to draw the line in order to prevent the slow erosion of standards. This line is where the medium, be it book, film, computer game or whatever, fails to entertain or add to the quality of life, but instead shocks and degrades.

At the moment the line is drawn just about line for society today. Freedom of choice must be allowed but we need the right to say no.

**Timothy Bell, Dundee**

Maybe there is a case for taking down advertisements, but who is to act as the independent censoring body?

**GK**

#### OVER THE TOP

Dots anybody out there own an Archimedes? Ha ha ha, that was a good one

I own a trusty rubber-keyed Spectrum from way back in 1982, and every day I use an Archimedes in school. I can safely say that the Speccy pees all over the Archimedes. People have slagged off the rubber keyboard

for years, but have they tried using an Archimedes keyboard? It is too slow and confusing, with all the keys in exactly the wrong places.

And then we come to games. You would think a 32-bit computer would supply better games than a 48K one but no. This is not surprising when you consider there are less games for the Archimedes than there are for the Spectrum 16K which went off the production line years ago

This letter is to let the country know what a great computer the Speccy is and what a load of garbage the Archimedes is!

**Daniel Holling,  
Isle of Lewis**

Great computer though the Spectrum is, aren't you going just a little bit too far in condemning the Archimedes? Without the Archimedes, there'd probably be no Virus for a start, and just you wait and see what programmers start doing on the games front once the Archimedes starts selling in serious quantities

**GK**

#### TIMELY ADVICE

I recently bought a game for my Atari ST on the strength of two reviews, one in Popular Computing Weekly and the other in New Computer Express. Both were glowing in their reviews of the game

I could not understand why your magazine waited until the May edition to publish a review of this game, but I now see that your reviewer has actually played the game and come to the same conclusions I did.

The game in question is Federation Of Free Traders. It would appear that the other two mags were drawn into the hype surrounding this game and I doubt if they even took the time to load it into a computer before reviewing it.

In future I will wait for your

reviews before parting with hard-earned cash and getting yet another ear-bashing from my wife when buying a new game.

**C Symons, Purley**

As is our rule, we waited until the finished version of FOFT was available before writing our review - which meant that we followed the two weeklies and were over six months behind a couple of other monthly magazines! Reviewing early or unfinished versions of games can easily lead to (an apparently) misjudgement on the part of the reviewer.

Here at ACE we'll continue to review finished versions of games as soon as we can and leave the other magazines to fall over one another and do deals in the chase for exclusives! We aren't being saucer-mouthed or anything - it's just that we believe that the version of a game that ACE reviews should be, to all intents and purposes, the game that our readers will end up buying.

Disappointed FOFT owners can find some good news on the news pages (where else?) this month. Greenlight plan to offer you an upgrade fairly soon.

**GK**

#### HOLY CLAIM

Do you remember all those eons ago in ACE Issue 5 and 7, there were some letters about Leaderboard hole in ones? The only hole in one shown on Leaderboard (not World Class Leaderboard) was by a Matthew Pedersen and Dad on then ST.

Well an 8-bit owner has got a hole in one. Me. I expect others have as well, but haven't written in. By the way, I own a C64

**Mark Fletcher,  
Stoke on Trent**

Everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes, according to Andy

Warhol. You've just had your first five minutes' worth Mark.

**GK**

#### ALL JOH THE FUN

I see multiple player games as the way forward in games design. Just imagine two, or indeed more parties in the same dungeon in the phenomenal Dungeon Master, or tens (or even hundreds) of player controlled characters in Carver Command or, on the list just goes on

While you at ACE see large network (ie through modems and telephone lines) games becoming popular, I must disagree and argue the case for local area networks - ie through direct cable links. I believe that the cost of playing by modem could make the idea prohibitive to the vast majority of computer users. Add to this the fact that only a very small percentage of users own a modem, and this puts the cost up by the price of the modem and software to drive it (by no means cheap).

A direct link could be the most viable alternative to the majority of nonplayer users - indeed many games already support this option - Powerdome, Mid Maze, Falcon to name but a few. The only problem with this form of link is the amount of equipment which must be gathered together in one place, thus limiting the number of players to the capacity of the room

While on the topic of nonplayer games, I would like to appeal to software companies to produce more games which utilise the Gauntlet II and Leathernecks 4-player joystick adapters, as this breathes life into shoot-em-ups.

**Scott Ramsey, Glesgow**

Would any ACE readers out there who are currently joining computers together and playing games remotely against other humans like to drop us a line?

**GK**

## NEXT MONTH...

ACE gets back on the road on 1st June when Issue 22 arrives on the shelves. Check it out - check it out

**JON BATES** gets to grips with some modules and continues his friendly guide to making music with your computer, while...

**BRIAN LARKMAN** gets ready to go on his hole and casts a professorial eye over readers' artistic submissions to the ACE gallery, while...

**STEVE COOKE** continues his foray into the world of Role Playing games on computer, while...

We tell you more about Compact Disc Interactive - Phillips reveal a few of their secrets, while...

The full ACE reviewing service gets into overdrive. Don't part with your cash till you've read our full-colour evaluation for YOUR machine.



Since we last went on the road to Mirrosoft (just before Christmas) one or two of the Imageworks liles have suffered from delay. Three 16-bit only projects, *Paladin*, *Terranum* and *Crimetown Depths* won't be appearing until the latter part of this year, and although *Phobos* is complete on the Commodore 64, Imageworks are holding on to it until Tony Crowther has got to grips with the Amiga and has finished the 16-bit versions planned. Meanwhile, new projects are well underway, and leading the herd is *Xenon II*—Megablast, the latest offering from the Brothers Bitmap.

#### ALL BITMAPPED OUT

Those pesky Xenites are waging war on Earth once again, only this time the vermin's are messing with the fabric of time. Bombs have been planted in the time zones that make up our planet's history and, if the Xenites manage to detonate them, the passage of history will be altered and Xenite domination of the world will be assured. So it's time to hop into your trusty space cruiser, young fellowme-lad, and zip off on a six-sector quest to save everything we hold dear. Plenty of extra weapons can be collected on the way, including a minelayer that allows a trail of delayed-action bombs to be laid on the screen, and the usual array of mega-powerful laser options.

The Bitmaps have been working with Bomb The Bass on the soundtrack that accompanies the game, and while this sequel is also a verbally-scrolling shoot-'em-up, this time there are three levels of parallax scrolling, and the player can dip in and out of all three. The action is fast and furious in the playable demo that currently exists

## ACE ON THE ROAD TO AMSTERDAM

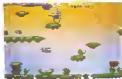
What better place to introduce the Bitmap Brothers and their new game *Xenon II* to the world's press than Amsterdam? And while everyone was assembled in the Dutch capital, Mirrosoft took the opportunity to divulge a hefty chunk of information on their forthcoming releases. Graeme Kidd checks out what's going down...

and ST, Amiga and PC owners can expect to be well impressed come Summer when *Xenon II* is scheduled to hit the shops.

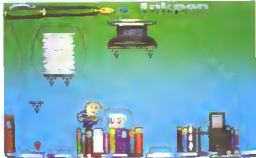
#### HUNTING BUGS IN SNOGGLEWAGGLE

*DDT* is set to be one of the prettiest arcade adventures ever produced on the Amiga: the Amiga's Hold And Modify graphics mode is to be used throughout this scrolling platform game, and from the early screens demonstrated, the effect is impressive. PC, ST and C64 owners are also in line for a treat later this year; while the graphics will obviously change from machine to machine, the gameplay and ten world play area will remain the same in all versions.

Playing the part of an apprentice Dynamic Debugger taking the



*DDT*, the continuing story of man's battle against insects...



Amiga - HAMming it up in *DDT*, on the quest to become a qualified debugger.

final tests that will lead to qualification as a Licensed Debugger, and a lucrative career on the bug-riddled world of *Snogglewaggle* you aim to rid ten gameworlds of pesky creatures. Tools of the trade need to be collected and used appropriately in true arcade adventure style: look out for bug sucking vacuum cleaners, a *DDT* gun and a champagne bottle that fires killer corks.

#### GOING TO WAR

Mirrosoft's PSS label is about to

commands in accordance with their character traits, so whether you opt to play Napoleon or Wellington, the experience is close to the reality. Enhanced 16-bit versions of the PSS 8-bit classic *Theatre Europe* are also imminent.

#### GOING TO THE MOVIES

Despite reviews to the contrary, *Cinemaware's* *Lords of the Rising Sun* is still not finished as these pages are being written, but we should be able to bring you a review of finished version next issue. The TV Sports series

is due to be beelied up with a couple more releases at the coming year, but the next movie-inspired release is to be *It Came From The Desert*, a spoof on 1950s B-Movie horror films. Few details are available as yet, but the town of Lizard Breath in Arizona suddenly becomes plagued by giant ants that arrive after a meteor storm.

Spectrum Holobyte are about to release the first in a series of Mission Disks to complement

Falcon: details on price and availability are still sparse, but the first disk replaces Disk Two in the Falcon package and offers a new world to fly over and a dozen new missions to attempt. And a brand new simulation is due for 16-bit machines later this year: *Vette*. Sail in the driving seat of the ultimate American sports car, the Corvette; the player can take on a

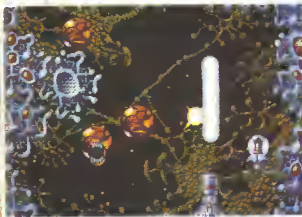


PC - Examining part of the *Waterlao* battlefield.

experience a resurgence: all has been quite on the wargame front for a while, but soon PC and Amiga versions of *Waterlao* are due to hit the streets at £24.99. Historically accurate, the game offers 3D views of the battlefield and allows orders to be issued to your generals: they interpret your

selection of classic sports cars in a road-racing contest through the streets of San Francisco.

There's plenty more promised from both Spectrum Holobyte and FTL, but for the moment everyone's keeping quiet about the details. More news as and when we get it. ●



Equipped with a well-aid beam weapon, hacking through hordes of raving mutants in *Xenon II*—Megablast.

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Artistic screen shots shown

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# FLAMING JUNE PREVIEWS

Heavyweights in the lightweight C2 category are Spice Engineering who are not only gearing up to put two cars into the C1 category and take on the likes of Jaguar and Porsche, but who have also been busy giving help and assistance to Artronic in the design of a driving sim centred on some of the world's most famous circuits including Le Mans, Arisa and ST versions should be out this autumn before the great 24hr race kicks off.

## RVF MicroProse

Kicking off the 'Prose MicroStyle label on ST (wildly followed by Arisa) will be this motorbike simulation based on the Honda RVF machine (Oooool An RVF!) As 'Prose are keen on accuracy they've been studying videos of some of the world's most famous circuits along with a load of technical data from Honda themselves, so expect plenty of realism mixed in with the knuckle-whiffling action.

That's you in the natty red leathers, gunning the engine and going for it.





## INNER SPACE CRL

Eek! Harry Criszen's been transported to the ninth dimension - a land of darkest phobias - where there are nine levels of attacking alien waveforms intent on destroying him! Only you can save him (the poor lamb, 'it was only trying to escape the matter splitter bomb, when it all happened). So stand by to enter hero mode.



CS4 - Have you got what it takes to save Harry, and the day.

## SPORTING TRIANGLES CDS

Pay attention 'cos I'll be asking questions later. But seriously folks, get snorting and brush up your sporting knowledge because the latest addition to the ever lengthening list of sporty quiz games is this CDS offering based on the popular TV series. Watch out for it, coming soon.

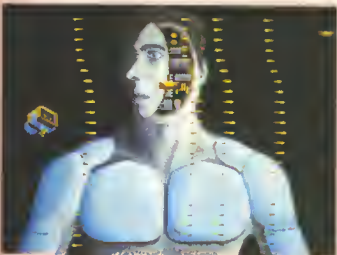


'I've have a P please Bob' - oops! wrong show.

## HYPERFORCE Addictive

WOW!! An arcade challenge over 30 levels that first appeared on the C16 several years ago and was written by our old friend TONY TAKOUSHI!! The ST and Amiga versions due for release SOON! Promise to be just as HECTIC, WRIST-TWISTING and FINGER-BENDING as the original. JUST LOOK AT THOSE GRAPHICS! We've told you a million times, don't exaggerate!

Could it... nah, couldn't be our Team...



Amiga - A high-speed fly-past in your F-111F

## BOMBER Activision

Want to fly lots of different planes on exciting missions, but can't afford all those flight sim's? Activision to the rescue with Bomber, a multi-aircraft flight sim with the emphasis on action. Soon you'll be able to climb into the cockpit of your F-111F (remember Libya?), or your MIG-29, or even your Swiss A37 if that's more your style.

## SHINOBI Melbourne House

The Sage version is already out, but coming soon for both 8- and 16-bit machines will be MH's conversion of the hugely popular coin-op. You, as a ninja hero, are out to rescue some children kidnapped by an evil gang of rival ninjas. The children have been stashed in different locations throughout the world and are constantly guarded by karate thugs, so you'll have to put your shuriken, nunchaku and sword to good use.

ST - That chubby one the tea chests does not look tea friendly. Best get ready for a rumble.



## NIGHTBREED Ocean

Fans of Clive Barker (he of Hellraiser fame) will soon be able to play the game based on Nightbreed, his latest film. Apparently Nightbreed contains some of the most exotic and terrifying creatures ever to be seen on the screen, so the game promises to look quite spectacular...

## TANGLED TALES Origin

This light-hearted, witty approach to traditional fantasy role-playing adventures has the player cast in the role of a wizard's apprentice with three increasingly difficult tests to perform as proof of his/her wizardly worthiness. There are over 50-one (and strange!) characters to meet in this loon and merrily driven RPG which tries to lighten the usually dark and gloomy mood of most games of this genre.

A snowball is hardly likely to give you much of a headache: is it?



**S**uburban paradise Pinner is now home to System 3, who are busy fighting a war against static on the carpets of their new offices. Game development on the C64 is regularly interrupted as yet another SID chip bites the dust, zapped by an electrical change that has built up inside a member of the in-house programming team. Despite these setbacks, work is barreling ahead on a clutch of releases: five original games, across most formats, are due from the System 3 stable during the course of this year.

First game off the starting blocks will be *Dominator*, a multi-level horizontally-scrolling shoot-em-up that takes place inside the biomass of a huge alien creature. All versions should be complete and in the shops by the end of this month.

When we were in Pinner, the games were virtually complete: graphics were nearly finalised, but gameplay was still being tweaked. *Dominator* looks particularly impressive as a Spectrum game, but all incarnations are packed with gutsy background graphics that seem almost moist and



**Spectrum - Scrolling along past some bees that have colonised the gulch of the alien in *Dominator*. At this stage of the game, none of the add-on weapons systems have been belted onto the ship.**

stringy to the touch. Hacking along inside the squidgy bits of a giant alien is a potentially yucky experience. The 8-bit versions like all 8-bit System 3 games from now on, are multilevel bossman Mark Cale says "it's the only way to give players value for money."

#### KIDNAP SHOCK

Following in the footsteps of *Last Ninja V* - due on the PC, ST and Amiga early in June - is *Vendetta*, a four-level arcade game which sets the player on a mission to catch up with a gang of kidnapers. Taking the part of a valiant character, the player must complete arcade adventure sections and then drive to the next location. Evidence must be collected on the quest to catch up with the kidnapers, as well as useful items and weapons. From the point of view of the police, the hero is engaging in criminal activities, so unless he can prove his

## ACE ON THE ROAD TO PINNER



**C64 - The end of the first arcade adventure section in *Vendetta*. Collect the car keys and you can get on the road...**

moves to the boys in blue they'll let the real baddies go and arrest him instead.

Four stages each contain a mission section in the style of *Last Ninja* it, but the 3D environment is that bit more realistic: you can pick up a videotape, for instance, and load it into a VCR to see an image displayed on the screen. Setting out armed only with lists, a camera to collect evidence for the police and a rucksack to store weapons and other items collected on the way, the hero's first objective is inevitably to get toolled up. Four weapons are available - an AK47, hand-grenades, a bazooka and an Uz sub-machine gun - and ammunition is stashed discreetly around the place. Fighting past baddies, the vigilante must reach the end of the current section with all the evidence and useful items he has found along the way, then leap into a car to drive to the next location.

*Vendetta* is played against the clock - one hour of gametime is available within which the mission must be completed - and there's more than one route to each destination. Knowing the shortest way saves time, so finding a map is a useful bonus. On the driving sec-

tions, helicopters and planes zoom in to attack and, although the car does have its own defences, collecting the appropriate keycard in the adventure section allows you to access an automatic targeting computer that makes shooting the bad guys out of the skies rather more straightforward. The car itself is indestructible, boasts two weapon systems and a turbocharger, and offers the driver the option to select gears manually or use the automatic gearbox.

Late June is the target release

time for 8-bit versions of *Vendetta*, with ST and Amiga software to follow late in August.

#### ELEPHANTS' GRAVEYARD

Tusker, an arcade adventure in which an Indiana Jones style character embarks on a quest to find the Elephants' Graveyard, is well under way, following one or two false starts.

The finished game should arrive on 8-bit machines during August, with 16-bit versions following a month later.

The hero indulges in plenty of hand-to-hand fighting on a journey through four levels, each level consisting of three sections in which useful items and weapons have been hidden. Starting out in the desert, the hero makes his way through jungle and water to the next section where a native temple has to be explored before

the action moves on to a native village contained in the third level. Finally, a magical garden is reached and the Elephants' Graveyard is found in a surreal tropical paradise at the end of the last level.

#### AUTUMN GOODIES

When the year draws to a close, System 3 plan to launch a tennis game - no details available on that one yet - along with a multi-level, multi-stage arcade adventure that takes the player through all the legends of the world. Battle through Hades, take on Achilles and hustle through Valhalla: just about every mythical land is featured, complete with appropriate nasty inhabitants.

And, of course, System 3 are committed to the Konix Multi System. Development systems were shipped by Konix to software developers at the end of March, and both *Last Ninja V* and *Vendetta*



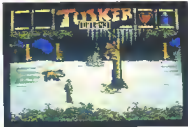
**C64 - Driving along the road to the next level in *Vendetta*: mind that police car. Due on all five major computer formats, *Vendetta* will also lead itself well to the Konix Multi System, according to Mark Cale, so naturally System 3 are writing it for the Konix too...**

ts should be unveiled on the Konix console during the PC show in September.

"We're going for the awards," System 3 supremo Mark Cale asserts, proudly showing us around the new offices that will soon be packed with programmers and artists. With the strongest line-up of products it has ever had, System 3 just might have cracked it come the giving out of gongs after Christmas. ●



**C64 - Tusker: the hat-wearing, leather-clad hero about to join battle with a couple of sabre-wielding Bedouins in a dusty desert encounter.**



**C64 - Troublesome menhays hurling rocks from the trees and charging wild bear can both cause problems on the journey through the jungle.**

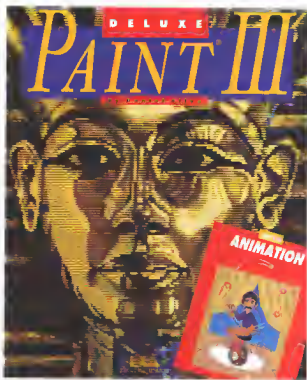
# NOW DELUXEPAINT HAS ANIMATION

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ELECTRONIC ARTS®

# ARCADE ACE

Andy Smith teams up with a mythical creature and a couple of not-so-mythical hard men in this month's up-to-the-minute round-up of all that's new and happening in the arcade scene.

## SAINT DRAGON



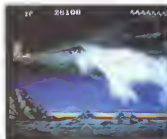
The Japanese have some wacky ideas when it comes to game titles. *Bad Dudes versus Dragon Ninja* was bad all right, but *Saint Dragon*? Still, they know how to make hit arcade games aud, judging by the success it has gained in Japan. *St. Dragon* is destined for the top over here.

After a quick look at the screenshots, it will come as no surprise to learn that this is a one player horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up over six stages. You control the sentry serpent itself and must manoeuvre through the stages shooting the flying and ground-based aliens that infest the place.

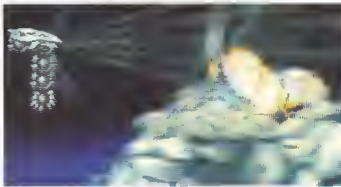
So far, so standard, but as might be expected, there are a couple of twists in the tail. Being in the form of a dragon, you have not only a head, but also a trailing body which coils and loops as you move around the screen. This could be a major problem if you had to dodge all the flak dished out by the aliens, but fortunately the body can absorb shots, so it's just your head that requires protection.

That said, you can't afford to get blasé, because contact with any aliens on any part of your body causes you to lose a life, and here's the next little trick. In a normal bog-standard arcade game you can pick up extra weapons which improve your firepower. The same is true here, but whereas normally all the extras disappear when you lose a life, this doesn't happen in *St. D.* Just as well, because the sheer number

The first end-of-level guardian, a huge mechanical bull. You're armed with ring lasers, so he shouldn't be too much trouble...

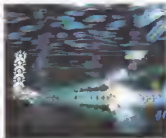


Level One: you've limited firepower at the moment, but luckily there's not much around.



That's better: taking out some alien installations with your multi-way firing.

Level Two: things are beginning to get just a little tricky now.



of aliens means you'll need every bit of help from the rug laser shots or bouncing bullets that you can get. Not merely because some of the pesky devils hide themselves in crevices, but also because there are a fair number of bigger-than-average enemies to dispose of, such as metallic panthers that spring up from the base of the screen just when you are hacking through a particularly prolific wave of aliens.

So it's got a couple of extra features, but it's just another shoot-'em-up, isn't it? Well, yes; but it's certainly one of the classiest to appear since *R-Type* and the difficulty-tuning hits just the right spot between frustration and addiction. If you're looking for a 'top of the range' shoot-'em-up, *Saint Dragon* is the business. ●

## EXTENDED PLAY...

### FIGHTING HAWK

● Taito

A vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up in the Flying Shark mould, involving much downing of enemy fighters and bombing of ground targets, with bullets and guided missiles, as you fly through five stages of enemy territory trying to ultimately destroy the new enemy bomber 'Dragon Hat' Ungoriat, but very enjoyable.



### NASTAR

● Taito

You courageous young thing you, braving a tribe of evil ghouls and ghosts to protect a sacred shrine in the land of Rastan. One or two players can join in this horizontally-scrolling hack-'em-up that boasts loads of extra weapons to pick up and loads of baddies to kill, including end-of-level bosses, and loads of jumps and moves. Fans of Rastan et al will find it well worth playing.



### RALLY BIKE

● Taito

This joystick-controlled motorcross sim has you racing across the States through six stages avoiding all manner of obstacles including other road users and helicopters flying overhead. Pull into petrol stations to keep your fuel tank topped up or you'll never make the checkpoint in time.

Challenging stuff that's bound to appeal to driving and racing fans.



# IKARI III



Right, who's next?



The quest of the Ikari warriors continues. These well and butch guys have already proved they're tough stuff in two previous games of beat-'em-up action, and now they're back. This time they've been drafted in to rescue a presidential candidate's kidnapped child (they don't mention which candidate's kid, but you can work out for yourself where the inspiration came from). It would appear that the child has not in reality been kidnapped, but it's a good enough excuse for a scap.

Either one or two players hack chop and kick their way through the changing enemy territory, and fight against increasingly tough enemy soldiers, using an eight-way joystick and punch and kick buttons. The enemy appears from all parts of the screen, and many of them carry weapons such as knives and machine guns. A well-aimed blow can send the enemy home with a bit of a headache and relieve him of his weapon, which you can then pick up and use

against someone else. Fail to pick up the item and it'll start flashing before it either disappears or - in the case of grenades and oil drums (?) - explodes, harming anything within blast range.

You get three lives for your money, with an energy meter at the top of the screen showing your state of health for each life. Apart from the 'one kick and it's dead' brigade, there are some meatier gnarls to destroy and end-of-level guardians to defeat, so you'll have your work cut out.

Ikari III has great graphics, great music and effects and great gameplay. Of course it's best played with a friend, but even solo it's got plenty of action and excitement to keep you pouring the money in.



(Above) Preparing to meet the first and of-level guardian. That knife's not going to be much help.

(Right) That machine gun should prove to be of much more use.



Thanks, once again, go to Electrocoin for all their help and assistance in producing Arcade ACE



*"In seven or eight years there will be a massive shakeout in the industry. Costs will rocket, games will become multi-million dollar productions..."*

**Phil Adams, Spectrum Holobyte President,**  
interviewed in ACE a year ago.



CD interactive games could well include full-motion video sprites against computerized backdrops, just like this TV advertisement for Clarke's shoes produced by D&B/Burkess Pearce...

# CD INTERA



With the advent of the Compact Disc as a data storage device, computer entertainment is about to enter a new era.

Tomorrow's game designer will work with full-motion video and HiFi quality orchestrated sound. Games will become more like movies, and the successful publishers will be those who have invested in teams that can operate in a multi-media environment.

The bigger companies are already bringing together musicians, scriptwriters, artists and directors and providing them with the software tools and authoring systems they will need.

The first fruits of these labours are beginning to be seen, and the hardware is a reality. But much more is yet to come...

**Y**ou may have seen it on television: an advert in which a small boy and his dog are sprites in a computer game, taking on a massive monster armed only with a football. A clever ad, maybe, but could it really be a glimpse into the future direction of computer entertainment?

The answer is yes, it could. Already experiments with new technology and new ways of thinking about the nature of audiovisual entertainment are leading to a new form of computer gaming, and the buzz word is 'interactive.'

The hardware is already there, or nearly there. The key will be Compact Disc storage, providing 600 megabytes of information on one single silver disc. Already, the worldwide installed base of CD ROM drives has been esti-

mated at some 110,000 units, with 15,000 units in Europe, most of these attached to IBM PCs or compatible machines, but some 5,000 linked to Apple Macs around the world. The PC Engine CD ROM is already forecast to sell 672,000 units in Japan alone.

But CD ROM storage can't improve the graphics or sound quality of the host computer it is attached to. The PC Engine games so far have been uprated versions of cartridge-based standards, and PC CD drives have been used to create a version of *Defender of the Crown* that sounds marvellous (have a quick listen to Radio ACE) but plays just the same.

The path of real progress lies in finding a way to mix genuine video pictures and music with computer control. Compact Disc video

and interactive television have blazed a trail for entirely new forms of dedicated systems to be developed that will allow game designers to mix full motion video sequences with computerised action.

#### TALKING TO YOUR TELEVISION

Cinemaware have been working on interactive VCR games with Ideal in America. The ViewMaster Interactive Vision system is due to be launched in the States this summer, and although it is aimed primarily at children between 3 and 8 years of age, it offers the opportunity for the viewer to participate in a TV programme, making choices by wiggling a controller or pressing one of five buttons.

This interactive VCR technology is fairly simplistic - 'great for kids' according to Cinemaware - but there's more to come. "We can't talk about it yet, but there are more capable systems in the VCR interactive world. With the other stuff we can do real interactive movies..."

#### MAKING MOVIES

Even the PC Engine could provide a user base large enough for software houses to start producing big-budget games that approach the complexity of movies, but the real contenders

# ACTIVATED

WHEN LAW FAILS...VIGILANTE PREVAILS

# VIGILANTE

1994 NEW YORK ..... The police dare not patrol the streets. The army cannot control the city. Law and order no longer exists. .... When street gangs dominate a city. When ordinary citizens no longer defend themselves for fear. And when law enforcement agencies are powerless to help. Your last chance is ....

**VIGILANTE**  
..... THIS  
TIME IT'S  
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## A CDI pilot system

Back in June last year, ACE brought you news of Electronic Arts' CDI pilot system - the Damulation. Twelve months ago, the EA Interactive team had already produced a fully interactive CDI demonstration. The demo is set in EA's HQ - terrorists have kidnapped the Interactive Team and it's up to the player to explore the offices, look for clues and rescue the hostages before they're turned into female androids.

The game is played rather like Activision's *Mandrill*, except the images on screen are digitised from videos made in EA's offices. Point to things on screen, click, and you can examine or use them.



Entering EA's offices, you have a strange feeling that something's wrong. Suddenly a phone rings - choose to pick it up and you hear a voice explaining the kidnap threat...

Not the usual kind of activity - something must be seriously wrong. Using the cursor, point and click on items to explore...



Even worse discoveries lie in wait for you... one member of the team has been seductively lured to his chair...

are the CDI and DVI standards.

Compact Disc Interactive is the result of a joint development between Philips and Sony. A CDI player will contain a CD audio player which will be able to handle existing audio CDs; but it will also contain the Multi Media Controller, or MMC. This is the hardware that allows audio, video and text data read from the CDI disc to be decoded, controls play and runs interactive programmes.

Digital Video Interactive is based on two chips, supplied as add-on boards for an IBM PC AT or compatible: the Pixel Processor and the Output Display Processor. Essentially by storing the differences between frames of video rather than complete data on each frame, DVI allows massive data compression. A single frame of video is compressed from 600K to 5K and the audio accompaniment is reduced to 500 bytes per frame before it is stored. Unlike CDI, DVI is not tied to CD as the storage medium but the massive data capacity of CD makes it a logical choice.

DVI decompresses the video and audio data in real time, and allows full-screen, full-motion video to be used. CDI, on the other hand, is likely to have a limited capacity for full-motion video: at present a window occupying half the screen size is about the limit.

CDI and DVI systems are currently with software developers throughout the world, although much of the development work currently going on is on directed at more serious, directly commercial applications like education, training and sales, not at sheer entertainment.

### A NEW ELECTRONIC ARTFORM

Meanwhile, leading software houses are preparing for a new way of writing games. Electronic Arts for instance, is concentrating on providing tools for writing games, tools that can be used by musicians, artists and scriptwriters who have never even thought about programming computers, let alone tried. "CD games will require megabytes of code" Grahame Riker from Electronic Arts explains, "and we need to develop tools that allow games to be written with a quick turnaround. For a consumer medium to succeed we need a wide group of skilled people without programming knowledge, who can use tools to create products."

Electronic Arts are hiring specialists to work on these games, building up a design team which contains people from specialist disciplines. Rob Hubbard, for instance, was tempted from the UK to work on a code package for EA which allows musicians to compose music on MIDI and bring a datafile to the programmers. "Musicians don't need to know anything about programming, so we can use people who have experience in scoring movies - we can now work directly with composing musi-

cians who can convey the underlying emotions in their soundtracks", Greg explains.

"We're starting to work with scriptwriters, people whose trade is writing stories, teaching them what it means to write an interactive script and we've always worked with graphic artists who do bitmap renderings and animations. Now we have a rotoscoping tool that allows us to film real motion video, capture it in a machine and let the artist manipulate the images easily."

The emphasis is on creativity, and with creative teams being run by directors and producers there could be obvious parallels to the film world. Are EA looking to make computer movies and could there be a crossover between the worlds of computer game programming and movie making? Not as Greg Riker sees it - the two media are different: "an interactive product has to be designed to last

much longer than a film - we want to create hits - let's create something without creating a movie."

### REAL CINEMA SOFTWARE

Cinemaware was set up in the first place as a rehearsal for new interactive technologies. President Bob Jacob explains: "We're using home computers as a training ground, developing and refining the methodology for interactive games." Whatever technology wins out, Cinemaware will be ready and waiting. As David Rordian, head of the Cinemaware Interactive Group puts it: "the way we have done our designs, particularly in the last year, they can all be expanded into CDI without being reworked."

"Currently we are doing work on authoring tools, seeing what we can make of full-motion video windows on the screen, for

## A PILOT'S DVI SYSTEM?

Apart from full-screen full-motion video, one of the main advantages of DVI is its capability to map textures onto solid 3D objects. This facility is particularly useful when simulating real-world terrain - or indeed cityscapes. Note how the pilot's view of the city changes as the plane is flown across the terrain...



Zooming along, you catch sight of a small red blob on the ground...



Banking in to investigate, the blob grows larger...



...Ah yes. It's that dog from the Hit Master's Voice advert!

instance, in TV Sports Football we could replace the digital picture of the coach with an actual person, and we could use camera views looking down the sides of the game," he continues.

The full implementation of CDI allows three planes of video to work independently on the screen, and the Cinemaware team is already working out how best to use the new medium. "With Defender, for instance, we could forget about the digital picture of the castle and build a model just as they would for a movie. The photo of the castle would be placed in the middle plane, and as a photograph of a 3D object it would have 3 axis depth. We could then have a digital sky in the background with thunder and lightning effects perhaps, and clouds moving along. In the front frame we could shoot a real knight and use frames of a real person as a kind of video sprite.

"Video windows could be used to give closeness, and with the opportunities for audio soundtracks we reckon it will be possible to get real emotional response from a game in the same way as you can from a film. Without human expressions and body language, you can't create real emotional responses, but CDI could make it all possible." The team at Cinemaware is thoroughly excited by the prospects of the future: "we're all for the movie world and we're dying to have real dialogue - we're really itching to get going", David says.

#### INTERACTIVISION

Bruce Davies, President and Chief Executive Officer of Mediagenic - Activision UK's American parent company - was emphatic about his company's commitment to the CD future.



"When it happens, we'll be there" he said. On the DVI front, Activision is one of the few software houses to have worked on a pilot programme - Flight Simulator, produced in conjunction with Insigeneering. William Valk, Director of Technology at Mediagenic is eagerly awaiting the arrival of CDI. "We hope it comes out soon... the delays are really frustrating."

William is more enthusiastic than most about the potential for DVI. The most interesting aspect of the system, he asserts, is the facility for mapping textures onto solid objects. "It's the most interesting thing about DVI. It brings realism." As far as he's concerned, the big news is that chipmaker Intel has bought the DVI technology from General Electric: "Intel are in the best position to drive down the price of the chipsets to a level that allows the consumer to afford them", he says.

Apart from their development work with DVI, Mediagenic have also produced a CD ROM entertainment product for the Macintosh, Initial

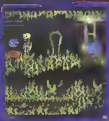


ly launched late last year on a set of five standard floppy disks. Manhole has been available as a Mac CD ROM product since January this year according to William Valk. Manhole uses the innovative Macintosh authoring system, Hypercard, in an innovative way (see panel). "Manhole uses a portion of Hypercard but we can't do all we want to with it - Manhole CD ROM taught us a lot, and we're now looking into building systems of our own to move things around." Bill explains. "Very few people have the pulse to get a CD ROM title out," he asserts, explaining that Mediagenic are investing in the future, developing authoring tools and game design methodology ready for the arrival of the technology: "we're preparing to support mass-market CD ROM once the platform is there. We're looking at the PC Engine which is due for launch in the States very soon, and we're very interested in that and in the new Nintendo and Sega consoles. We intend to be flexible and go on to a variety of platforms -

# PHOBIA



Commodore 64 screen shot



**TO SLEEP, PERCHANCE TO DREAM...** but don't sleep too deeply 'cos all your nightmares are waiting for you in this unique arcade blast from Tony Crowther.

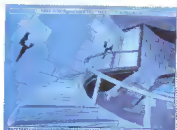
Phobia is set in the minds of men, feeding on every human fear; spiders, fire, death - and dentists!

Grob hold of your courage and prepare to face the frightening challenge of each of the 14 planets that Phobos have set against you. Can your body take the heat, can your brain take the pressure!

**Available on: Amiga £24.99, Atari ST £24.99  
Commodore 64 Tape £9.99 Disk £12.99**



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In the interactive world of the *Manhole*. Climb up the beamstalk to see a tower; touch on the tower, and draw closer... touch again and arrive at the door; click on the door and it opens... click again, and pass through... click on the airway and ascend towards another adventure.

sensors computers can have CD ROM drives, and CD ROM drives are not just for games. The PC Engine with CD ROM offers a quality that is not that much lower than the CDI standard, and with luck there will be a bridge between computers with CD drives and CDI equipment - people should be able to load the same disk on several different systems."

#### THROUGH THE MANHOLE

Described as 'a fantasy exploration for children of all ages', *Manhole* takes the user into a charmingly convoluted world that borrows from the scenarios of classic children's literature such as *Alice in Wonderland*. The player is the active, first person explorer who wanders around interacting with the environment.

Point, click, watch and listen: the only four things you need to do when exploring the world of *Manhole*. At the very start of the game, you can see a fire hydrant and a manhole cover. Click on the cover and it moves aside as a

giant beanstalk grows into the skies. Three routes are now available to the player: into the hydrant, up the beanstalk or down into the underwater world inside the manhole.

Gameplay is both simple and child-like. You just wander around, touching things, finding out what happens. Sometimes one of the whimsical characters will speak to you. Touch doors or desk drawers and they open, revealing hidden items. Objects in the gameworld can be manipulated by simple touches: musical keyboards can be played, books can be read, TV sets and radios can be turned on, and all the while appropriate digitised sound effects make the experiences real. Overall, the effect is both pleasing and believable to the adult mind - in the hands of younger children *Manhole* will certainly captivate.

As a demonstration of the potential of interactive CD-based products, *Manhole* is an interesting pilot. While sampled sounds, monochromatic cartoon graphics with simpli-

tic animations and fantasy scenarios are not exactly unheard of in the world of entertainment software, the way in which they are linked together in *Manhole* opens new vistas, much wider than those opened by laser vision games such as *Dragon's Lair*.

In *Manhole*, all the player has to do is move a cursor over an image and click on an item of interest. The interactivity is total, the experience of exploring a new and strange environment convincing. Just imagine what the *Manhole* experience would be like with full-motion video shot from live action...

#### INTERACTING WITH VIRGIN

Of all the software houses exploring the possibilities of interactive CD, Virgin Mastertronic is perhaps best placed to produce multi-media programmes. Parent company Virgin is already involved in books, music, film and video as well as entertainment software - all creative disciplines that will feed CD-based interactive pro-

t sleep  
you in



IMAGE



Step-frame stills can be linked together to produce appropriate action sequences. Before setting a compass bearing, you need to make adjustments for the local magnetic field...

grammes of the future. No surprise, then, that Virgin has set up an Interactive Media unit.

About 18 months ago work started on an interactive programme based on Sir Ranulph Fiennes' 1982 expedition to the North Pole. Several hours of movie film together with 500 slides were made available to the Virgin team, who sat down to design an interactive simulation of the real expedition that would be "enjoyable and entertaining as well as instructive."

The aim was to simulate the total experience of planning an expedition and carrying it out – participants should be able to interact with one another as well as with the programme. And this was intended to be more than a "theoretical" laboratory project. The programme was expected to sell, and even make money. "The main academic background to the project was to produce a programme that developed interpersonal skills, and we wanted to publish it, so it runs on the standard system in schools – the BBC Domesday system" William Beckett, the man in charge, explains.

Naturally, the main aim of the North Pole project was to develop the methodology for writing interactive programmes that involved video footage and still pictures. "We went into it with closely-defined criteria" Mr Beckett says, "but we looked to develop skills in-house for products on CD – we felt it was worth getting into early to learn about the techniques involved. The only way to learn is to actually produce something."

It is unclear which medium will come out when in the next year or so – people are grappling with relatively arcane products, and although video and computers are not the

easiest of things to marry together in a friendly system, it looks as if CD will be the delivery medium for this type of product. Our programme was designed to be transferred to CD-based systems, but as the faster vision system is here and now, we used it."

The Domesday System, which uses a faster vision player linked to a BBC computer, has been installed in around 2,000 schools. The hardware costs around £4,000 to buy. If you already have access to the system, the Virgin North Pole Expedition software is available for £199 including manuals, a teacher's guide and a copy of Sir Ranulph Fiennes' book, *To The Ends Of The Earth*.

#### DVI OR CDI?

William Beckett and the Virgin interactive media people have looked at both CDI and DVI and are keeping a weather eye open on all the new interactive technologies. "We don't mind which technology wins" William explains, "providing the right design decisions have been taken, you can move the product to any media. For instance, we've already learnt that it's better to take images from film than from videotape."

"The difficulty with DVI is that it requires a powerful engine to decompress and I'm not sure you actually need to do that in interactive programmes. Interaction is non-linear, so there isn't the need for the full motion video capabilities offered by the DVI system. It may be more effective to use the background and mid-ground offered by CDI, if only because of the variety you can introduce into the programme."

"DVI definitely has a place – there are some great applications you can envisage for it, but the PC is not necessarily the place you'd start if you were going from here – you need two boards and a PC to run DVI programmes, and it's going to be difficult to get the hardware price below £2,000 and £3,000. From the programme-maker's point of view, working with DVI means everything has to be pre-defined and compressed down first. CDI, with its window of full motion animation on the screen, may be more flexible. The latest version of CDI may allow full screen full-motion video, but even if it doesn't I don't think it's much of a drawback – designers just need to think what they're doing with it."

#### FORWARD WITH VIRGIN

The Virgin Group as a whole has a large range of entertainment interests – including a CD pressing plant in its Oxford Street Megastore, which could just as easily produce CD ROM disks as music pressings. Virgin Interactive is working on the plots for a couple more educational products at the moment. "We're looking at specific CD-only products, which are probably a year ahead of us. We hope to be able to deliver games on CD-ROM eventually."

While home entertainment products on CD ROM might be a way into the future, CD-based arcade machines from Virgin's Arcadia subsidiary are a definite possibility, although no firm details are available at present. Today's technology, however, would allow the CD-ROM designer to produce a much more sophisticated game than the comparatively simplistic *Dragon's Lair*. ●

Trekking across the Tundra...



Just one of the problems encountered on the trek to the North Pole. Multiple choice questions are answered by clicking on the icon options.



Calculations based on real-life data from the expedition are part of the simulation. Unlike most games, however, you can't lose a life by making a mistake.

## Next Month ★ The full story of CDI...

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## ARGUE! BARTER! LIE THROUGH YOUR TEETH!!!

As the people of the Bloodwych awoke to a new dawn, they find a stranger in their midst - from one of many races he has come. His task: to halt the demon that lies dormant within the Castle of the Bloodwych.

Unification of the Crystals of Sengula will ensure the Behemoth in his lair for all eternity. Should they remain separate, then he shall rise to bring darkness into the world.

This unique role-playing fantasy game allows greater interaction with the environment than has ever been seen before. Argue, barter, negotiate - even lie through your teeth! The fully implemented personalities of all the characters in Bloodwych allows a rich style of role-playing that has only been dreamt of.

With one or two player simultaneous mode, this is the game that you've been waiting for. Bloodwych for those that dare!



Atari ST Screen Shot



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Commodore 64 (tape)	£9.99
Commodore 64 (disc)	£12.99



IN CONJUNCTION WITH ACE, VIRGIN  
MASTERTRONIC ARE GIVING AWAY THE TOP  
OF THE RANGE CONSOLE PACK, ALONG WITH A  
TACK OF CONSOLE-ING PRIZES FOR RUNNERS UP.

# COMPETITION

Top prize in the great Virgin Mastertronic giveaway is the Sega Super System pack, which contains the basic console unit, two controllers, the light Phaser and a set of 3D glasses. As if that package, containing several games for the light gun and 3D glasses, weren't enough Virgin Mastertronic are throwing in a couple of extra Sega games of your choice and a Sega T shirt.

Should you miss the top prize, next in line is a trendy Virgin sports bag and tracksuit: the hippest equipment for getting fit or having fun in, and ideal clobber for attempting Atlantic crossings in hot air balloons. Then five runners-up packs are on offer, each containing a game from the Melbourne House label, a game from the Leisure Genius label, and two games from the massive Mastertronic budget collection. You get to choose the titles you want.

The challenge we're setting is simple enough - all you have to do is answer five straightforward questions, then complete the coupon with your name and address. Runners-up get to choose the games of their choice, and as a gentle reminder of what's on offer, here's a resume of the Melbourne House and Leisure Genius ranges that we prepared earlier.

## LEISURE GENIUS

**Scrabble** C64 Spectrum, Amstrad  
**Scrabble Deluxe** C64 Spectrum, Amstrad, ST, PC, Amiga  
**Manopoly** C64 Spectrum, Amstrad  
**Cluedo** C64 Spectrum, Amstrad  
**Scraples** C64 Spectrum, Amstrad, ST, PC  
**Risk** C64 Spectrum, ST, PC, Amiga, secon

## MELBOURNE HOUSE

**Double Dragon** C64 Spectrum, ST, PC, Amiga  
**Aaahh** Amiga  
**Roadwars** ST Amiga  
**War in Middle Earth** C64 Spectrum, Amstrad  
ST PC Amiga  
**Metropolis** PC  
**Rackford** ST, PC  
**Barbarians** C64 Spectrum, Amstrad  
**Terrorpods** C64 Spectrum  
**Xenon** C64 Spectrum ST, Amiga

Down to the questions. The Virgin group was founded by Richard Branson in 1970, and in the last 19 years it has expanded into a variety of activities, building on its early record-retailing foundations. Today you can play computer games published by the group, fly across the Atlantic to America with the Virgin airline, buy a Sega console distributed by Virgin and, of course, pop into a Virgin Megastore to buy books, records, CDs just about anything you need to have fun, in fact.

# WIN A SEGA SUPER SYSTEM



1973, and then Cluedo and Risk. It's not surprising that we're the first to bring Cluedo's first alarm for Virgin!

2. We've mentioned crossing the Atlantic in a balloon, but Richard Branson's more modest attempt at a record-breaking crossing in a hot air balloon was used just what was the name of the award he was trying for?

3. Melbourne House has published three games based on Tolkien's tales of Middle Earth. Name two of them.

4. Name three Mastertronic games.

5. What is the name of the British company that publishes the board game originals of Cluedo and Manopoly which have been converted to the home computer by Leisure Genius?

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# VOYAGER

OCEAN voyage to  
the moons of Saturn

**EARTH,** 1977. Major world news: the Queen of England celebrates her Silver Jubilee, the Sex Pistols join in the celebrations with a trip up the Thames on a boat blasting out their latest chart topper 'God Save The Queen' and the satellite Voyager II is launched.

Somewhere in space, 2032 The Sex Pistols are long since forgotten, Queen Elizabeth II has died, and an alien life form scoops up Voyager II and takes the satellite back to its home world to decipher the information it holds.

Earth, 2139. Present day. Aliens appear in

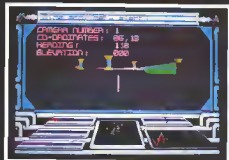
the Solar System, wiping out all space-borne craft of Terrestrial origin within the System in what's undoubtedly a sign of aggression. Several peace envoys, sent to negotiate with the aliens, fail to return; the world forgets about the rain forests and the Neutron threat to concentrate on imminent invasion and almost certain destruction from the hostile aliens, the Roxaz as they've come to be known.

Oblivious to all this is one Luke Suayles, a criminal returning to Sol after a 50-year stretch of Investigative Exploration. Now, Luke is not slow, and he soon learns of the alien presence and their intentions. On closer inspection, he discovers that the Roxaz are using the 10 moons of Saturn as bases for

## ST VERSION

The smooth, fast, colourful graphics help to make a very believable game world. You'll be hooked on this after just a few plays, and it'll take you a while to beat, but it's just lacking that extra something to keep you playing for months.

**GRAPHICS** 9 **IQ FACTOR** 4  
**AUDIO** 7 **FUN FACTOR** 8  
**ACE RATING** 862



Drop a camera and you can view, and shoot at, any enemies from outside your craft. And if you're wondering what your craft looks like - here 'tis.



If you're in a tight spot, launch a radar missile to confuse the enemy craft, then either make a run for it or blast the aliens as they come. Rocking to the missile.



Pick up the pod that enables your craft to sprout wings and suddenly taking on flying aliens becomes a lot easier.

their forces. So there's only one option open to him. He'll have to defeat the Roxel army single handed.

You take the part of Luke and, starting at Janns, endeavour to wipe out the alien craft from each moon before slipping through a warp gate to the next. To do battle you've had to leave your mothership and send it on to Phobos (the tenth moon) to wait while you scurry around in a shuttle. This shuttle is none too big and not well equipped. In fact, it's only armed with a front-firing laser, a couple of atomic bombs and some power pyramids (small energy bombs). You can pick up pods from the surface of each moon which were dropped by the mothership when it passed over, and enhance your firepower. One pod even allows you to transform your tank-like shuttle into a flying craft and back again at the touch of a button. This proves to be very handy, especially when you need to destroy airborne alien craft.

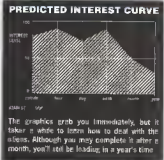
Each moon is more heavily defended than the last, not merely in the number of enemy craft, but in their intelligence. Moon Two, for

example, is infested with horrid craft called Squashers that can only be destroyed by atomic bombs, and as there are always more Squashers than you've got bombs, life can be tricky. (A clue: try trapping the Squashers behind buildings, and polish off all the other craft before getting three or four to follow you, then let 'em have an atomic bomb and see how they like it!)

Voyager is a bit like a 3D Starglider, but better. Not only are the graphics better, but the gameplay is far superior. You can't simply rush around blasting everything, because it won't work - for a start, you have a limited amount of fuel - tactics are needed if you hope to survive and progress. Because a certain amount of thought is involved, you'll find it much more entertaining than the average Rattlezone clone and will consequently be playing it for long periods of time. The repetitive nature of the game just takes the edge off, though, so it just messes out on attaining the coveted 900+ rating, but it's still one of the best 3D shoot-em-ups we've ever seen.

● Andy Smith

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£19.995k	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£24.995k	IMMINENT
IBM PC	Version planned, details TBA	



# RAIDER

IMPRESSIONS are the sincerest form of flattery

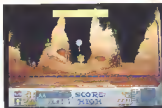


On arriving at the second system, the player has to enter the planet field via the opening on the left, and destroy the gun emplacements while avoiding all the enemy's flak!

**AMIGA** owners have been denied conversions of the *Gravitar/Lander* clones *Thrust* and *Ods*, but this debut product from Impressions goes some way to redressing the balance.

As with all the predecessors, the player's ship obeys whichever of the laws of gravity are in evidence and is controlled from the keyboard using the now-standard rotate and thrust commands with the landscape scrolling around the central vessel.

The game is set in deep space (aren't they all?) where this player's mission is to visit four planets in each of eight star systems and retrieve a stolen fuel pod from each. Having captured all four pods, the craft must then be directed to an automated powerplant where the pods are repositioned in their correct loca-



Having blasted all the enemy guns on the first level, the ship deploys its tractor beam to pick up the required fuel pod.

tions. Success is rewarded with access to the next system, and a password allowing the previous star system to be skipped on later goes.

Pods are only released once all the plan-

etary defences have been neutralised using the ship's cannon. A tractor beam device – which also doubles as a shield – is then used to collect the pod and any spare fuel canisters that are lying around on the planet's surface.

Although *Raider* obviously borrows heavily from *Ods* and *Thrust*, it doesn't quite manage to impress as much as its inspirations due to the unimaginative theme. Also, the control method isn't as precise as other games in this mould, since the ship's inertia is a touch over strong. However, the difference is only really noticeable to anyone brought up on the previous *Gravitar/Lander* clones: anyone new to the genre will swiftly adapt to the gamestyle, and veterans can practise an old art on new canvas.

● Steve Jarratt

## RELEASE BOX

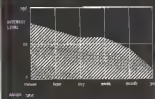
ATARI ST	£19.99dk	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£19.99dk	OUT NOW

## AMIGA VERSION

While the multidirectional scrolling is all very smooth, the graphics do have a slightly amateur quality about them. Sound is limited to sampled analogue effects for thrusting, firing and explosions, all of which are adequate but no more.

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 674			

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The tried and tested gameplay proves entertaining from the outset, and the level-entry password system helps sustain interest right into the year.

# SILKWORM

Rebel, ST version reviewed, £19.95dk

Shoot-em-ups come and shoot-em-ups go, so what could possibly make this one stand out from the crowd?

Having just about everything you could wish for in a game of this type helps. Want a simultaneous two player option? It's got it. Want mid- and end-of-level guardians to destroy? It's got 'em. Want to be able to pick up extra firepower so blasting the flying and ground-based targets becomes a little easier? No problem.

Beginning to get the idea? Good. Now for the scenario. You're piloting a helicopter (a friend drives a jeep if two play) across a continuous horizontally-scrolling landscape, blasting

all and sundry that comes your way – including the gratuitous amount of flak that the enemy throws at you. You've got three lives to lose before you get the first of three 'continue' options, so you've got nine lives in effect (still not enough, guys!).

All in all, *Silkworm* is a very good shoot-em-up: nothing more and nothing less. The attacking craft are varied, and there's plenty to blast, so it'll keep you busy for a good while and is guaranteed to take years off the life expectancy of your joystick fire button.

● Andy Smith



A surprisingly quiet moment, having just disposed of a missile base and avoided a tank.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	2
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	5
ACE RATING 735			

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**REBEL CHARGE™** Rebel Charge at Chickamauga recreates the Confederates last offensive of the Civil War. Played on a 64 x 64 square grid.



The game can be played at 1 of 3 levels of difficulty and is a must for players of the 'Gettysburg' system.

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(Main Picture) On the second level (hence the darker sea) TT waits in the centre of the island village, ready to blast the two tigers who are about to close in for the kill.



Typhoon presents a wiggling bag of Sea Sprites to the irate Sprite in the armory.

# TYPHOON THOMPSON

BRODERBUND/DOMARK raise a storm

**FLIGHT** 396 plummets down to the surface of Aquat, an ocean world in the Omega system, and all hands are lost at sea — except one. A tiny infant survives the crash, and is adopted by the Sea Sprites that inhabit the placid waters of Aquat. After several abortive attempts are made to rescue the child, the task falls upon the narrow shoulders of reluctant hero Typhoon Thompson.

Forcefully persuaded to board his personal jet-sled Thompson heads for the nearest group of islands where he is met by the Spirit Guardians, remnants of a long dead civilization, who help him on his quest. At the beginning of



After an unsuccessful attempt, The Spirit Guardians levitate Typhoon, prior to installing a new jet-sled underneath him.

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST £19.995k IMMINENT

No other versions planned

## ST VERSION

The shots above do little justice to TT's graphics: they must be seen to be believed. The animation is nothing short of superb — even on such tiny characters — and the water effect is enhanced with lovely splashes and ripples. Similarly, the 3D is quite stunning: movement is dead smooth and the illusion of depth is almost perfect. Sound is minimal, but used to a purpose, with decent spot effects realistically fading with distance.

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 3

AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 9

ACE RATING 822

each level they ask for a particular artifact — dagger, hammer, balloon or protector — which is held in the Sprites' armory at the centre of a 'village' of six islands. To retrieve the item, Thompson must capture all the Sprites from the surrounding islands and trade them for the required valuable from the irate Sprite in the central armory.

Sprites appear from their archipelagic dwellings either once the island is shot or automatically after a short time. However the little amphibians are enclosed in small hovercraft called Flyers, which home in on Thompson's jet-sled and attempt to remove this minor annoyance by a variety of means, including both missiles and more direct methods.

One hit from the sled's blaster sees the Flyer destroyed, and the Sprite is sent whizzing through the air to land with a splash some distance away. While the creature is stunned,

Typhoon must reach the Sprite and scoop it up in a sack; otherwise, the Sprite re-emerges and swims, dolphin-like, back to his island.

Having captured all the Sprites and swapped them for the required object, Thompson may revisit the Guardians in order to receive his orders for the next level, and also take receipt of an extra weapon.

The above scenario might sound a bit eccentric, but the gameplay is in fact very straightforward and very absorbing. The jettisoned mouse control soon becomes second nature, and the only drawback is that the limited gameplay might soon pall due to overfamiliarity on completion of the game (although the latter is quite a task). Still, Typhoon Thompson simply dips quality, and is a suitable farewell to the reappearance of Broderbund products.

Steve Jarrett

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Simply amazing for the first few goes, and the challenges hold its appeal for a week or two before reptilian starts to kill interest.

FEATURED IN  
Radio ACE

900  
ACE RACES



# GRAND MONSTER SLAM

GOLDEN GOBLIN make 1-101-17



The main game: the barbarian has nearly cleared his demons. Just one more, then the home run.



WITIC K / 01  
RACE: Barbarian

PROFESSION: Heavy Gunner

PROCG: Abilful, but unfir

CHARACTER: Kuuuun! Ace is that it is correct it  
will immediately taking for win

and will surge

DONORED BY: Eulalia Akshidenes

The top shot shows all the eight contestants from the first league; you are at top left. Below is the detailed run-down on your opponent: Germanic samurai strikes again.

**WHAT** sort of monster is it that would gleefully go around launching cute little furry animals into the air with its boot? The sort of monster that wants to win! There's only one way to win in this game, and that's by accurately and forcefully introducing cute, lovable Beloms to the unyielding toes of your Size Tens.

The GMS takes place in the land of Ghold where goblins, dwarves, ogres, humans and many other monster races live alongside each other in perfect hatred. To avoid the complete collapse of social order, the monsters confine their potential battles to the field of play.

You're a dwarf, but don't let it eat you down, because dwarves are good at this game. In the first two sections of the game you are placed with seven other competitors in a knockout competition. The players in the first section are not too good, but none of them are easy to beat.

Each match pits two creatures against each other on a pitch viewed from one end, and your dwarf is always at the near end. In front of each player is a baseline with six Beloms lined up on it. The players walk along the line and boot the poor, quivering Beloms over at the opponent, with the aim of completely clearing the line of Beloms and charging up to the other end of the field.

If you can hit an opposing player with a Belom it floors him for a while, providing you with the best chance to whack a few more in his direction. Beloms automatically line up on the baseline to be kicked, which is very self-sacrificing considering the hammering they take. A shot can be angled in either direction and hoisted in the air, although the danger of this is that it might fly into the crowd, resulting in a penalty.

Of course, in a game like this, the penalties are anything but normal. They involve kicking a Pelon (a big duck) into the opposing monster's endzone, and while success throws three Beloms over to the receiver's side, it also causes one Belom to cross to the kicker's side. The computer players can give away penalties too, but that depends on how skillful they are.

It may all sound simple, but the gameplay is utterly manic, with the dwarf scurrying along the baseline in a desperate attempt to kick Beloms and avoid incoming ones. Most of the skill lies in timing shots to keep the other player pinned down, which is not at all easy when it has to be done at speed. This is even harder in the second knockout section, because a wooden fence with a gap in it is placed in the middle of the field. Shots now have to be hoisted over the fence or punted through the gap.

After every game, the Beloms get their revenge for all the hoofing about by surrounding the player and launching a 'precisely-aimed tick attack'. They can be pushed off for a while, but defeat is inevitable. The longer you can survive, the more points are amassed.

After quarters, semis and then the final have all been played, there is a qualifying game where Beloms have to be booted into the mouths of 'Faulons' perched on pillars. These pillars are at different heights, and a certain number of successful shots are needed to qualify you for the next knockout series.

In the third section three champions await, who all have to be defeated in order to achieve final victory. Unfortunately for you, they also possess magical abilities to surprise you.

Despite being simplistic and repetitive it's a very addictive game with the same sort of attraction as Speedball. You will keep coming back to it regularly, because no two games are the same and it's always a challenge. It's cruel, nasty and despicable to treat Beloms like this, but we love it.

● Bob Wade

## SCREEN TEST



The two sub-games, *Revenge of the Beloms* and *Foulton Feeding*. [Top] One Belom repulsed at top right but another is coming from the left. [Bottom] One Foulton has been fed and the second Belom is flying into an open maw.

### RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	Price TBA	IMMINENT
AMIGA	Price TBA	OUT NOW
C64/128	Price TBA	IMMINENT
IBM PC	Price TBA	IMMINENT

No other versions planned

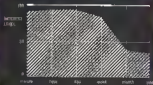
### AMIGA VERSION

The graphics and animation are exceptionally good, the poor little Beloms being the highlight as they quiver, whizz through the air and splat into the screen. The music and effects are sick and enjoyable; the roar of the crowd, the grunts of impoverished competitors.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	7

ACE RATING 900

### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Belom Bumping really hooks you, and needs great concentration and persistence. With no two games alike, and a variety of opponents it's sure to come back to for months.

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IV

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ENTERPRISE

Official Computer Games Magazine

ENTERPRISE

**THIRD** of the SSI/TSR range of computer games based on the AD&D system to arrive is *Hillsfar*, bringing with it a number of questions. Will it be an arcade adventure, like *Heroes of the Lance* or will it be more in keeping with the role-playing system, like *Pool of Radiance*?

*Hillsfar* takes its name from the town in which the game is based, and actually turns out to be a mix of game styles, rather than falling neatly into one category. Before setting out on your adventures you can import a character already created in *Pool of Radiance* or create yourself a new persona (Thief, Fighter, Magician and so on) in true RPG style.

Then the adventure starts, placing you at a campsite a few miles from the town. To travel to Hillsfar, you go via the first of the four arcade-style sub-games: horse riding. Using the joystick, you have to gallop along a path jumping over obstacles such as puddles and fallen

#### C64 VERSION

The graphics are fine, with especially nice animation in the horse riding sequences. The sound effects are few and far between, and they're nothing special when they do appear. A nice mix of arcade and RPG.

GRAPHICS **B** IQ FACTOR **5**  
AUDIO **2** FUN FACTOR **C**  
**ACE RATING 732**

branches and ducking kamikaze birds that flap along at head height.

The other arcade style games include fighting in the arena, where you try to bash your opponent into unconsciousness, target shooting, where you fire a total of ten darts, arrows, stones or daggers at a series of targets for a gold prize, and maze wandering/lock picking. These last two are linked because on entering almost any building you'll find yourself looking down on your character as he wanders around. Soon you'll come across some treasure chests and if you've got a set of picks, or a friend with a set of picks, you can attempt to spring the locks by matching the picks to the lock tumblers - the number of tumblers varies from three to six - within a time limit. Failure not only loses the lock, but will

# HILLSFAR

More AD&D from SSI - OK?



The main map shows the town of Hillsfar and your position. The inset display reveals that you are outside the Fighter's Guild; enter, and you will be given a mission.

probably also spring some sort of trap that will have an adverse effect on your hit points.

On to the adventuring side of things. The screen display breaks down into three main sections: A large map, viewed from above, shows your position in the town at all times. In the top left is a window showing a view 'through your eyes' and at the bottom of the screen is a window displaying text messages.

What you do in Hillsfar is largely up to you. If you're into the adventuring side of things, you can try interacting with some characters and discover some quests. For example, if you're a thief character, head for the Guild of Thieves, chat to the main man and he'll send you on a mission. If you prefer the action side of things, wander to the arena and pick a fight. Actually, whichever type you prefer, you'll almost

certainly end up taking part in both. Wandering around the city, for instance, you might come across a pub and pop in to have a couple of beers. If your luck's bad, you could easily end up being carted off to the arena for a fight, or you could just as easily pick up a juicy bit of gossip that sends you off adventuring.

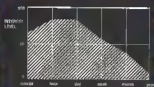
And that's about it. All quests involve one arcade sequence and most involve more than one, making Hillsfar much more of a middle ground game than true RPG. That's in some ways a great advantage, and could well attract arcadesters to this type of game, but don't expect it to be as involving, or the game world as believable, as a game like *Pool of Radiance*.

● Andy Smith

#### RELEASE BOX

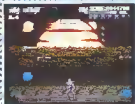
ATARI ST	Details TBA	Autumn
AMIGA	Details TBA	Autumn
C64/128	£19.99ck	OUT NOW
IBM PC	£24.99ck	IMMINENT

#### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

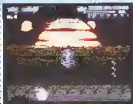


The arcade games are fun the first few times, and after a little exploration you'll become quite involved. However, after a week you'll have seen much of what's on offer and will be looking for new adventures.





To destroy the blue mechanical on the left, KLIFT must move close to the one-charge slot.



...and perform a vertical spinning jump. Clipping the slab, it falls to the left, destroying the charging.

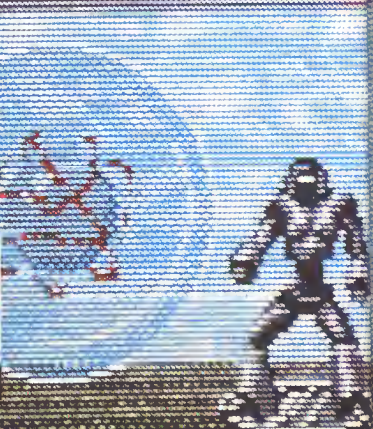
919

# BIO CHALLENGE

by **DAVID W. WHITE** and **DAVID W. WHITE** with **DAVID W. WHITE** and **DAVID W. WHITE**



The first end-of-level guardian in his cavern. A well-timed shot hits the large robot smack in the chops!





**RICHARD** Claydeman makes Delphine Records lots of money in fact, he's one of the biggest-selling recording artists in the world. So what's that got to do with *Bio Challenge*? You might ask. Well, Delphine have dipped a corporate toe in the soft ware world and come up with the second-biggest seller in France after *Captain Blood*. And now it's being released in this country under the guidance of Palace Software.

Coded by the co-authors of *Elite*'s ST Space Harrier, *Bio Challenge* features a typically French (ie. strange) scenario, and some unusual and innovative gameplay.

The player takes on the mantle of a KLIPT cyborg, bearing the body of a robot and controlled by a human brain. To test the effectiveness of the experiment, KLIPT is expected to conquer all six levels of the *Bio Challenge*.

Each level is split up into 'planets' accessed by contact with colour-coded transporters which hover at the top of the screen. The level is completed by collecting four pieces of amulet from around the planets, and then defeating a large end-of-level guardian.

Planet landscapes are littered with deep crevasses, movable platforms called 'charge slabs' and three varieties of bio-mechanical beings: small ones fly across the screen in formation, medium-sized creatures suspend themselves from the charge slabs, and larger mechanicals move and jump along the ground.

The airborne creatures drain KLIPT's energy - indicated by a falling oil level - but otherwise prove little more than an annoyance. KLIPT simply deals with these pests by going into a high-speed spin (possibly pumping at the same time) which destroys them. Oil is replenished by collecting barrels along the way, but if KLIPT's reservoir is completely drained, he loses a life and restarts the level from scratch.

The other two alien species cause similar drags, and can be destroyed in several ways. KLIPT can collect red armour from one of the cauldrons which regularly appear at the top of the screen. This kitted, whenever the android goes into a spin any flying creatures which hit him are sent whizzing off across the screen, and act as missiles to destroy both the charge slab hangers and ground-based beasts.

Other cauldrons also become visible as miners are destroyed and include such goodies as additional time, bonus points, an extra life, increased of tank capacity and green armour, which allows KLIPT to destroy any enemies that are on the screen simply by performing a backwards somersault.

Charge slabs carry one, two or three charges, and can be made to fall on unsuspecting beings by reducing the charge to zero. KLIPT does this by performing his backflip while standing on the slab, or by clipping them on the edge on an upwards jump. The latter manoeuvre causes them to either fall sideways, if they only carry one charge, or to move sideways, reducing the charge by one unit. In this way, slabs holding two or three charges can be positioned as required.

When suitably smashed on the head, shot or smart-bombed, the defunct creatures yield smaller sections of amulet or units of ammunition which are then used against the guardian. Once the amulet is complete, KLIPT can head back to the large sphere at the start of the level where he is transported to his meeting at the guardian's cavern.

During this sub-level, whenever KLIPT attempts a jump, he is transformed into a float-

ing cannon which slowly falls back to the ground. The guardian constantly rises and falls, shooting as it does so, and KLIPT's bullets must be timed to hit the guardian on the most vulnerable area, his head. Successfully defeating the large mechanical allows KLIPT to continue his mission on the next level.

This strategic shoot-em-up - but without the shooting - sounds a lot more complicated than it actually is. Once the mode of play becomes familiar the action proves extremely addictive, and the game is nicely balanced to provide a continual challenge.

*Bio Challenge* is beautifully presented and features a great tutorial demo, which is well worth watching! In fact, the only real omission is an level entry system allowing the early stages to be bypassed on later plays. Once learned, though, the levels are rapidly completed, and there is no strict method for completing each level. A great debut for the Delphine/Palace team. Let's hope this is the start of a beautiful relationship!

● Steve Jarrett

#### ST VERSION

Not content with dead smooth low-layer parallax scrolling, the programmers have also used some clever techniques to produce a playing screen with more than its normal allotment of colours (up to 160, apparently). As with other French games, the ST's soundtrack is also pushed hard with a snuff sampled soundtrack and some very pleasant effects during play.

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 5  
AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 5  
**ACE RATING 919**

#### AMIGA VERSION

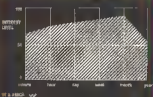
Visually identical to the ST save for a sabbler palette and even more colours. Although the spot effects are comparable, the Amiga boasts a predictably superior version of the title track which can be played throughout the game.

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 5  
AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 5  
**ACE RATING 919**

#### RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST £19.99dk OUT NOW  
AMIGA £24.99dk IMMINENT  
No other versions planned

#### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The unusual gameplay provides instant allure, while familiarity with the controls and nicely-graded levels guarantee an enthralling and long-lasting challenge.



- 1 Positioned below the freshly revealed Red Cauldron, KLIPT braces himself for a high jump.
- 2 Reaching the top of his leap, about to headbutt the cauldron.
- 3 The broken cauldron reveals a red blob which...
- 4 ...falls to the ground, closely followed by the others.
- 5 KLIPT stoops to pick up the blob, and then moves on, neatly attuned to his new armour.



Your character, the eccentric-looking type with the large beard and clock, is going to have problems sneaking past the green thing on the ground that throws white objects.

# STORMLORD

It's raining HEWSON

**RAF** Cecco is one of the biggest names in 8-bit games, with an impressive track record of releases like *Cybernoid*, *Equinox* and *Exolon*. Nearly all these games have blended shoot-'em-up action with arcade adventure to

produce a unique style. *Stormlord*'s 2D side-on view is also typical of Cecco games, as are the detailed graphics that appear on all screens.

Your character walks and jumps around four levels, throwing fireballs and swords to dispose of enemies, solving a series of puzzles, and finally completing each level by rescuing five imprisoned fairies.

Objects which pop up throughout the game, although only one at a time can be carried, must be used to perform specific functions: keys to unlock doors, an umbrella to keep the rain off and honey to attract bees, which doesn't take too much working out. Among the more entertaining features are trampolines that act like teleports but do so by chucking you through the air.

As with Cecco games there's a host of timing problems where evil-doers have to be avoided rather than shot. All this avoiding and



The bees, to the left, have been successfully avoided using the honeypot.



A surprisingly casual attacker jobs some garlic and warts, hands in pockets.

**GRAPHICS** ■ **IQ FACTOR** 4  
**AUDIO** ■ **FUN FACTOR** 4  
**ACE RATING** 277

shooting is familiar but difficult, so even hardened players will have trouble completing the whole thing. It's enormously frustrating, and far too frequently demands near perfection from the player.

Despite the fact that it has been well programmed, looks great and is really quite action packed, *Stormlord* is just too frustrating. If gameplay is to progress at all, it must get away from timing problems, unavoidable deaths and other things best left back in 1984. *Stormlord* is not really a bad game; it's just not as good as gamesplayers these days have every right to expect.

● Bob Wade

## SPECTRUM VERSION

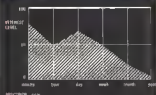
The backgrounds are detailed and attractive and are accompanied by some lovely animation on the sprites. There are some good in-game effects and a nice title tune too.

**GRAPHICS** ■ **IQ FACTOR** 4  
**AUDIO** ■ **FUN FACTOR** 4  
**ACE RATING** 574

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.99dc	July '89
AMIGA	£19.99dc	July '89
SPEC 128	£9.99cs	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	£9.99cs • £14.99dc	IMMINENT
C64/128	£9.99cs • £14.99dc	IMMINENT
IBM PC	No version planned	

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Frustrating gameplay has a dampening effect early on and, although this can be overcome, the game only has four levels.

# FRIGHT NIGHT

Microdeal, Amiga version reviewed, £19.95dc

Gerry Dandridge is a member of the undead, and Gerry would like to remain undead. So Gerry has to leap, slink and cavort around his house, after dark, and suck the blood of anyone he happens to come across.

These people aren't sold on this idea, so will attempt to harm Gerry by lobbing various articles at him: Garlic, holy water and so on. As the nights pass, the number of people stumbling into Gerry's house increases (including people he killed yesterday!) but so does the number of hazards that have a detrimental

effect on his health, including ghosts of past victims and hands that thrust up from the floor, contact with any of which will cause your 'death force' meter (health to you and me) to take a tumble.

*Fright Night* has been a long time coming, the wait was not worth it. The game concept is dull, the play area is small, the animation is poor (Gerry looks and moves more like Elvis Presley than Elvis ever did) and the gameplay is frustrating. Not a game to add to your library.

● Andy Smith

# THIS IS THE COURSE THAT JACK BUILT.



The 34th at Pebble Beach



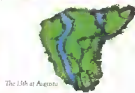
The 14th at St. Andrews



The 10th at Bandon



The 4th at Bandon



The 11th at Augusta



The 8th at Merion



The 17th at Bandon



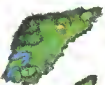
The 16th at Oakmont



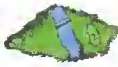
The 12th at St. Andrews



The 10th at Augusta



The 3rd at Merion



The 12th at Augusta



The 14th at Bandon



The 17th at Bandon



The 12th at Royal Lytham



The 7th at Augusta



The 17th at St. Andrews



The 11th at Pebble Beach



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# THE SEGA SELECTION

## CALIFORNIA GAMES ★ £24.95 crt

Eyys's much-acclaimed and well-lad-back sports simulation has been beautifully converted to the Saga. All six events of the original have been squeezed in intact, and one major advantage is not having to wait while each event loads.

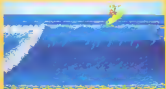
For anyone not conversant with the American beach sports simulator, California Games includes half-pipe skateboarding, foot bag (or hackysack) juggling, surfing, roller skating, BMX bike racing and throwing the flying disk (frisbee to you and me).

Gameplay revolves around strategic use of

the joystick and fire button to perform set manoeuvres, and success is rewarded with points. Each event may be played or practised individually, or as part of a multi-event challenge. Unfortunately, the multi-player feature of the original has disappeared along the line.

Sega California Games is smarter than all the other computer versions with the possible exception of the Amiga. The gameplay is looking a bit dated, but since it's the first of its type on the Sega, it should receive an appreciative audience. And deservedly so.

● Steve Jarratt



Our California Dreamin' hero crests a wave, resplendent in his beach gear.

GRAPHICS	10	FACTOR	3
AUDIO	5	FUR FACTOR	5
ACE RATING 710			

## VIGILANTE ★ £24.95 crt



The Vigilante aims a graceful kick to the face of an unpleasant character who is threatening him with a large tool.

Once more unto the streets dear friends and let's kick some ass while we're there. Of course, it's all in a good cause: rescuing some poor gal called Maria. That's right, the usual sexist drivel. On well, it's a good excuse for a punch up.

Your rather puny character has to progress along the horizontally-scrolling levels, fighting off the thugs, hoods, gang members and assorted street scum that attack from both sides. The cause is much aided by grabbing a weapon which dispatches them faster and at longer range.

The bad guys come in many varieties as well, taking many blows to defeat. Some of them also have the nasty habit of grabbing onto you if they get close enough draining energy rapidly.

Once again it's uninspired gameplay, but as scrolling combat games go it's fun stuff that will not easily be beaten.

● Bob Wade

GRAPHICS	10	FACTOR	1
AUDIO	3	FUR FACTOR	6
ACE RATING 661			

## TIME SOLDIER ★ £24.95 crt

Cast in the role of a time soldier (surprise, surprise) the player — or players, for there is a simultaneous two player option — has to breach the barriers of time itself in order to rescue five troopers who are lost across the aeons, and ultimately defeat the evil being, Gylend, who sent them there in the first place.

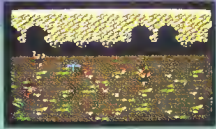
Basically, it's a shoot 'em up with a twist: a series of vertically and horizontally-scrolling landscapes representing the different time zones, and battle any indigenous hostiles that appear.

On destroying specific enemies, additional weaponry becomes available and is simply

picked up to add temporary impetus to the assault. No surprises at the end of the level either: a guardian being manifests itself according to the period, and must be wasted before attempting the next era.

Time Soldier is a good example of a game that, unsurprisingly, this version doesn't improve upon the matter. The visuals are sparse, the action is a little slow, and unfortunately after a few goes it all becomes a bit ho-hum.

● Steve Jarratt



With his bazooka, the time-traveller blows away cave-men who've been unsportingly looting stone axes.

GRAPHICS	4	IO FACTOR	2
AUDIO	4	FUR FACTOR	5
ACE RATING 505			

## ALTERED BEAST ★ £24.95 crt

Calchy name for a game with some aye-catchy graphics. The beast in question is a hero risen from the grave who can power up, first into a Charles Atlas body and then into a demonic, fire spitting wolfman.

Power ups are gained by destroying certain foes, encumbered on the gently scrolling levels. They come from both sides, above and

Against a background of fine neo-classical architecture, the muscular fighting man leaps to the attack, ensuring the deaths of the Warriors of Purple Trousers.



even up from the ground, to be punched, kicked and zapped out of existence. End-of-level guardians are of course essential and take a hell of a lot of beating.

Not very imaginative in gameplay, but notable for its classy graphics. The wolfman, however, adds to the fun considerably, because as well as shooting fireballs he can launch himself across screens and lay waste to all who stand before him.

● Bob Wade

GRAPHICS	7	IO FACTOR	1
AUDIO	5	FUR FACTOR	6
ACE RATING 661			

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# Blood Money



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But it's going to be tough. From the instant you hear that driving soundtrack you'll be plunged into a maelstrom of sheer destruction, as you plunder the four Outer Planets in a kamikaze quest for gold and glory. The aliens in **BLOOD MONEY** set some vicious traps, and it will take all your skills just to survive.

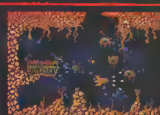
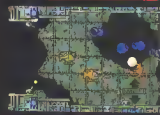
Use your awesome firepower wisely and you'll turn those aliens into blood money that can earn you extra weapons and equipment. And you're going to need them, because there are no easy screens in **BLOOD MONEY**. It's a life and death struggle that demands all your tactical genius and shoot 'em up know-how before you battle through to confront the four planetary Guardians.

With its vast bit-mapped graphics, superb animation, blistering sound, devilish obstacles, awesome firepower and 1 or 2 player options, **BLOOD MONEY** is the greatest challenge yet faced by any games player with a passport to outer space.

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**STRANGE** how some games come about. Take this one: a conversion of a coin-op that was derived from pinball tables. Weird certainly, but the coin-op was a big success and produced a far more complex game than any normal pinball ever could or ever has.

There are four whole tables to play, each with its own task to be completed. Each table is split into two halves, with flippers on both halves, so if the ball slips off the top section, which it's launched onto, the bottom half scrolls into view. If you lose it off the bottom screen it's one of five balls gone.

#### AMIGA VERSION

Excellent tunes, varying for each of the levels and accompanied by good effects. Graphics are close to the arcade version. Ball movement is not perfect, but it's close enough to offer plenty of fun for a good while.

GRAPHICS ■ IQ FACTOR 2

AUDIO ■ FUN FACTOR ■

ACE RATING 769



On the left is the first level, the volcano, on the right the second stage, the ruins. If you can hit the ball up one of the tubes that start above the volcano, it lights up one of the letters. Light all seven and multi-ball mayhem results.

# TIME SCANNER

ACTIVISION's time and motion study

The first level is the volcano, followed by the runs and the pyramid. If these three can successfully be mastered, the fourth and most difficult table awaits. To get between levels the ball must be hit into a 'time tunnel' which will warp it there. The task on 'volcano' is to hit the ball up a chute to light up the letters in the word volcano. Once this is done, you get three balls at once - a great chance to amass a score.

A similar situation is found on the other

two levels, where completing a task gets you a multi-ball play. You don't really want to know what to do, do you? I thought not. Have fun finding out.

Once all three levels are completed the final table can be reached via a time tunnel. Here again there's a task to be completed, but this time it mixes in the old classic Breakout and is by far the hardest of all the levels.

Like the arcade version there's a ball option for rattling the screen around. This can save the ball from impending doom and the machine never objects to the bouncing about. Tiling is vital for victory, as is accuracy with the flippers.

Basically, Time Scanner is pinball with extras thrown in to good effect. It may not be



This is the top half of the pyramid stage, where a task has to be completed. However, we don't want to spoil it out for you.

original, and it may not take long to see everything, but pinball has always been very addictive and this game is no exception.

● Bob Wade

#### ARCADE ACCURACY

Both the graphics and the game play emulate the coin-op closely. An excellent job.

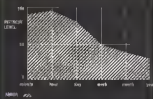


COIN-OP SCORE ■

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#### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Even after the excitement of the first few days has worn off, you'll still keep coming back for more.

## ST VERSION

The graphics are good, but the gameplay can be very frustrating. Once you know the courses it won't take you long to win every game.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 2  
AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 7  
ACE RATING 547

(Right) ST - A water race, and you're piloting a tricky hover. These craft tend to generate lots of inertia, so you'll have to beware of oversteer.

**SUPERCATS**, Quads and Meteors are all modes of transport, surprisingly enough, and they all feature in this game based on the popular TV series *Run the Gauntlet*.

On the telly, international teams compete against each other in several races on land and water, driving various kind of weird and won't-detrail vehicles. In the computer game you and a couple of mates can compete against each other in nine races (three groups of three legs) again, for the most part, in assorted vehicles.

The driving races consist of three laps of a set course that varies depending on the type of



craft you're in. The action's viewed from above, though it's more 'above and a bit to the side' for the buggy driving races. Just like in most Codemasters games, the controls are simply left, right, accelerate and brake.

Competing, whether playing solo or with friends, involves racing round the course against two computer drones. Times for each leg are lotted up at the end of the race and points awarded to whoever finishes most quickly. Failure to achieve the standards required, in other words not finishing in the top two, means you won't progress to the next round, so you will have to take risks and really go for it sometimes.

As might be expected, there are other factors as well as the computer drones that can prove a hindrance. Explosions on both land and sea can send your craft spinning out of control for a few vital seconds, and colliding with the computer drones delays only your progress, and not theirs.

*Run the Gauntlet* is not one of Ocean's better games. It's well put together and is fun to play (although the collision detection is a bit iffy), but it's far too easy to beat to keep you playing for months.

Andy Smith

# RUN THE GAUNTLET

Multi-eventing around with OCEAN



**Spectrum** - Supercats are the slowest of all the land craft, although that's not necessarily a bad thing!

## SPECTRUM VERSION

Everything's very fast, and the graphics are fine. It's tougher to win on the Speccy, so there's more testing challenge, but you'll master it eventually. An enjoyable short-term game in the Super Sprint and BMX Simulator mould.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 2  
AUDIO 4 FUN FACTOR 8  
ACE RATING 683



**Amstrad** - Piloting a hover. Use the small map in the top corner to guide yourself round the courses.

## AMSTRAO VERSION

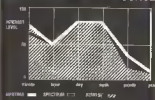
The gameplay is closer to the Spectrum than the ST version, so you can expect to get a fair amount of play from it. The graphics are good, being both smooth and colourful. Probably the most enjoyable version overall.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 2  
AUDIO 4 FUN FACTOR 8  
ACE RATING 683

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## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



After the initial frustration caused by control problems is overcome, you'll find it extremely entertaining - until you beat it, which will be sooner rather than later.

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# STATUS



The white team try to stop the blue team from scoring another goal. That scanner/map of the whole pitch on the left can be shrunk in size if you wish.



Decide where you're going to strike the ball (consult the scanner to see where the rest of your team have positioned themselves) and hopefully you'll score.

**WHILE** the world waits for Microprose Soccer to appear on the 16-bit machines, Anco have sneaked in with their eleven-a-side footy sim. Is it worth considering, or should you save your dosh?

Well, we can now tell you that it's definitely worth considering, because it's one of the best footy games to have appeared on the larger machines to date. As seems to be the vogue nowadays, the game is viewed from above with you controlling whichever player is

# KICK OFF

ANCO put their boots on

in the best position to get the ball. It's a one or two player game, in which you can either play against a friend, or take on the computer single-handed.

The matches last from ten minutes (five mins per end) to a full-blown 90 minutes, and if you don't fancy practising first (penalties, corners or just joystick control) you can pick your formation and dive into the game.

Win the toss and you can decide whether to play upfield (play is vertically up and down the screen) or down for the first half, the teams switch for the second half. Though you can't see the whole pitch on the screen at once, there's a scanner in the top left, showing your position on the pitch.

But what about the gameplay. Your players automatically dribble the ball once they get hold of it, and turning with the ball can take a while to master (hold the joystick fire button down before touching the ball and you'll trap it, making it much easier to control) but

once you do, you'll find the pace of the game makes it thoroughly enjoyable. Add to the great gameplay a host of skill levels, a league to play in and a save option and you're onto a winner.

● Andy Smith

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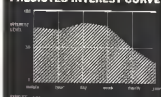
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## ST VERSION

The graphics and animation are good, the sound is nothing special, but the gameplay is. A great football game that will have you queuing up for a season ticket.

GRAPHICS ■ IO FACTOR 3  
AUDIO ■ FUN FACTOR 5  
**ACE RATING B21**

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The controls take a while to grasp, but as soon as you've got the hang of them you'll find the fun lasts.

# DANGER FREAK

Rainbow Arts, C64 version reviewed, price TBA

The Germans have at last started to produce some original software instead of just coin-op clones. This particular example puts you in the role of a stuntman trying to film several sequences for the cameras.

The first sequence is a horizontally-scrolling road filled with hazards like ramps, potholes, puddles, policemen and iron bars. These must be driven round, ducked under or wheeled over as fast as possible. Every mistake causes cuts in the film, affects your health and puts up the budget. Too many errors and everything has to be started again.

At the end of the sequence you have to

jump onto the back of a car and from there onto a rope ladder hanging from a helicopter. None of this is very easy and takes a frustrating amount of time to master.

After an interlude screen based on Super Sprint it's back to stunt action on the water. Same sort of obstacle-dodging as in the first stage, but easier. The third section takes you into the air where all sorts of birds and planes attack and have to be avoided.

There's basically not enough of the game to hook you for long, but it is quite jolly.

● Bob Wade



Starting off as the Highway to hell where maintaining speed and avoiding the obstacles are extremely difficult tasks.

GRAPHICS ■ IO FACTOR 2  
AUDIO ■ FUN FACTOR 6  
**ACE RATING 5B7**

# SKWEEK

LORICIELS make like a mouse

**CUTE** makes a comeback with this lovable, spiky little orange chap called Skweek. His massively important purpose in life is to turn blue squares pink. What more worthwhile reason for existence could there possibly be?

There are 99 levels that have to be pinkified, each one viewed from above and scrolling vertically when Skweek nears the edge of the screen. The floor is made up of tiles that all have to be turned pink by running over them. That's the game in a nutshell, but there are a host of features to complicate the action.

Dotted all over the levels are tiles that throw out nasty little monsters, most can be

taken out with the forward firing fun ball. Skweek starts with, but other weapons can be collected that are more effective.

As well as extra weapons there are other objects that appear randomly on each level like

## ST VERSION

The graphics could be described as very colourful or even garish. There are several lures that bounce along jolly, all adding to the cartoon feel.

**GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 4**  
**AUDIO 7 FUN FACTOR 8**  
**ACE RATING 746**



Skweek, the cute little orange creature with the punk hairstyle and naive grin, is threatened by a not-so-cute green monster. There's gonna be a fight...

shields extra lives, extra speed and exits to the next level. You're guided to these by a direction pointer, but they will disappear after a while. Some tiles are also marked with a boom symbol: green ones act as smart bombs and blue ones destroy surrounding tiles.

Getting through the early levels is easy but things get more complicated the further you go. There are short-cuts that act as teleports, disappearing blocks, materials blocks and ice blocks that make Skweek slide. Using these basic building blocks the programmes have created some tricky levels which require pause for thought as well as racing for the time limit.

Not all the bonuses are good for Skweek. Reversed controls make it all too easy to run off the edge of a layout. Another problem is turning tiles blue instead of pink; it doesn't last long, but it still wastes precious time.

It is enormously jolly and guarantees lots of short-term fun. 99 levels will keep most players busy, particularly with the 'random levels' option that plays them in random order.

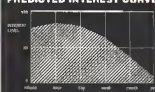
● Bob Wade

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## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The many features and levels keep interest high at first. However, even the random levels option doesn't stop the gameplay waning after a few weeks.

# STEVE DAVIS WORLD SNOOKER

CDS, ST version reviewed, £19.99

Six game styles are supported (snooker 15 balls, snooker 10 balls, UK pool, US pool, English billiards and Carom billiards) all of which are played on the same table except that US pool uses blue 'cloth'.

Play follows the standard pattern of selecting the direction of shot, signified by a movable line 'attached' to the white, and then setting strength and spin prior to releasing the cue. Also, any really doggo shots can be taken back, like a chess move, and the more memorable attempts may be replayed in slow motion. Each game can be played versus a human opponent, or the computer which is set to one of six experience levels, up to Steve Davis standard.

As with any game that purports to simulate the green baize sports, authenticity is highly

important, and SDWS fails on several counts. Maximum shot strength is ridiculously overpowered, and the targeting system just isn't accurate enough, given the resolution of the screen and the size of the balls. A zoom mode is incorporated, but proves useless for the longer shots.

The display is neat and tidy, but not our standing. Spot effects are weak although a sampled commentator punctuates the action and a smart version of the BBC's snooker theme introduces the game.

It is fun to play as a game in its own right, and does have lasting interest, as long as you appreciate its idiosyncrasies, but genuine snooker and pool enthusiasts won't be greatly impressed.

● Steve Jarrett



In practice mode, the direction line can be extended from the white to predict the movement of the object ball.

**GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 5**  
**AUDIO 4 FUN FACTOR 1**  
**ACE RATING 540**



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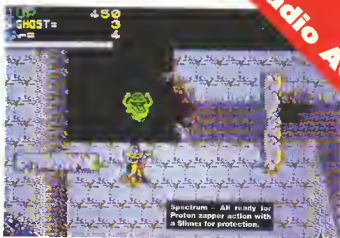
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**WHO** were the other ones? impostors? The wisecracking (or underlings) amongst us will need no explanation, but for the rest, the story goes something like this. Ghostbusters the film became an Activision computer game (full price, then budget). Then in America a TV cartoon and comic appeared, featuring the GBs team and called The Real Ghostbusters, which arcade giants Data East decided would make a jolly coin-op machine. I see ACE (suits Four). Now, Activision have decided it would make a jolly computer game

#### SPECTRUM VERSION

The game is multiloop, which is offputting. The graphics are OK, though the animation leaves a bit to be desired. Not a game that stands out in any department.

**GRAPHICS** 8 **IQ FACTOR** 2  
**AUDIO** 5 **FUN FACTOR** 6  
**ACE RATING** 574



Spectrum - All ready for Proton zapper action with a flicker for protection.

# THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

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#### ST VERSION

The intro music and the effects are OK. The graphics are uninspired, and the perspective used is confusing. Many this to the poor animation and you're not left with the grace of the year and certainly not a game that'll keep you hooked for long.

**GRAPHICS** 7 **IQ FACTOR** 2  
**AUDIO** 7 **FUN FACTOR** 7  
**ACE RATING** 586

too, so here we have it: the computer game of the coin-op of the comic-cartoon film spin-off.

You, and possibly a friend too (because it supports simultaneous two player action), have to light your way through some ten levels of ghost-infested mayhem, collecting the nasty things with your Proton beam zapper. Before collecting the ghosts you have to shoot them first with your normal gun (a quick tap on the fire button) to turn them into nice, cuddly, fluffy white ghosts, before holding your finger on the fire button to trap them in the beam and draw them into your backpack.

There are benefits to be collected - from either ghosts or shooting parts of the scenery, such as oil drums - including a circling Simer who acts a shield. If things weren't tough enough already, then remember you've got to complete each level within a time limit.

The collision detection is poor and the gameplay is bad, it's nothing more than an average shoot-em-up and is certainly not as much fun as the original Ghostbusters game

• Andy Smith

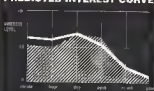


#### ARCADE ACCURACY

Just about every feature of the coin-op has been included.

**COIN OP SCORE 8**

#### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Frequent deaths cause initial frustration, but once the levels are learnt progress becomes altogether easier.

# RENEGADE III

Imagine, Spectrum version reviewed, £8.99cs

The urban gungho combat nut is really out of his depth this time. Forget cleaning up the mean streets of the city; he's battling through time zones against the nastiest things history can throw at him.

The battle starts in prehistoric times where dinosaurs and cavemen, looking like Rock and Gwail who drove the Boulderbomber in Wacky Races, try to beat his skull to a pulp. He must battle along the scrolling landscape, jumping gaps and climbing walls, to get to a couple of major confrontations. These are against multiple opponents who all attack at once.

Battle to the end of the level and a time machine will whisk him off to the next time zone. All the energy and lives are replaced and battle is rejoined against a new group of sprites. The second zone is ancient Egypt, full of mummies, the third zone is a mediæval encounter with knights and the fourth a trip into the future.

The action is very similar to the previous game, enjoyable but undermanning. It has been a good series of games but hopefully this is the Final Chapter.

• Bob Wade



You're the cool dude in the shades being attacked by birds dropping eggs and West Ham supporters throwing rocks.

**GRAPHICS** 8 **IQ FACTOR** 1  
**AUDIO** 8 **FUN FACTOR** 6  
**ACE RATING** 574

# GAMES FOR ADULTS

Microstyle is the new software label. The new option for those who demand fun, excitement and challenge from life.

Each game is specifically written for the ST and Amiga, making full use of the capabilities of these machines. So they produce stunning graphics and superb gameplay.

A detailed motorbike racing simulation, Honda R.V.F., is the first Microstyle title available from all good software stores.



Microstyle Software, Unit 1, Hampten Road Industrial Estate, Tisbury, Wilt. G16 6LU. Tel: (0666) 54326.

Welcome to this month's TNT, where the usual batch of hints and cheats is accompanied by the first instalment of a two-part 8-bit player's guide to *War in Middle Earth*, written by none other than the man himself, Mike Singleton. There's also some useful coaching for TV Sports Football players, clues for the spy game *The President is Missing*, and a helping hand on *FOFT*. Plus a new C64 Robocop listing - you lucky people!

## R-TYPE

Hands up all those *Specboy* owners having a hard time against the evil Bydo Empire? Thought so. Since infinite lives would make things a bit easier, here they are in listing form. It's a bit long, but it certainly is worth all the effort.

Simply type it in and **RUN** it to load *R-Type* with infinite lives and infinite credits Good, huh?

**NOTE** When the border flashes, stop the tape. Start the tape again when the border turns black.

10 FOR A=23296 TO 65535  
20 READ F IF F=999 THEN  
RANDOMIZE USR23296  
30 POKE A,F: NEXT A  
100 DATA 243, 62, 255, 55, 221  
110 DATA 33, 203, 92, 17, 195  
120 DATA 11, 205, 86, 5, 48  
130 DATA 241, 175, 50, 35, 93  
140 DATA 205, 22, 93, 30, 119  
150 DATA 33, 147, 243, 1, 85  
160 DATA 11, 52, 11, 35, 120  
170 DATA 177, 32, 249, 29, 123  
180 DATA 211, 254, 32, 237, 62  
190 DATA 202, 50, 123, 251, 205  
200 DATA 109, 251, 33, 68, 91  
210 DATA 175, 50, 42, 252, 34  
220 DATA 22, 254, 49, 0, 0  
230 DATA 195, 222, 254, 62, 201  
240 DATA 50, 80, 254, 205, 64  
250 DATA 254, 33, 90, 91, 77  
260 DATA 22, 106, 1, 10, 0  
270 DATA 237, 176, 195, 0, 106  
280 DATA 175, 50, 254, 145, 50  
290 DATA 149, 146, 195, 253, 133  
300 DATA 999

■ Daniel Russel, Wroth



## FOFT

For all those people who rushed out and bought *Gremlin's Elite* play-alike on the ST without reading the reviews first, here are some desperately useful hints...

At the beginning, take the initial T50 credits and go straight into the Trading option. Watch the price of food in the Agricultural Products section, until it falls to 18 or below. Buy as much as possible, then keep watching until the price rises to 20-21 credits. Now sell the lot.

Continue to do this, using up all the available credits each time. Eventually, all the food can be bought and sold, inducing the market to fluctuate between 7 and 22 credits.

After playing the market for some time (patience, patience!) profits should be high enough to afford all the useful goodies: class three shields, tertiary weapons system, and a Star Drive Mk 5 (which speeds up travel in local space).

After hyperspacing to a system and reaching the planet by using the short range jump, space stations are located by accessing the long range radar and looking for the white stalk. It's then just a matter of flying within visible range, and initiating the automatic docking computer.

If under vicious attack from hostiles, contact the craft in question using their ident code. This tends to end their assault.

■ Drew Dobber, Lincoln, Steve Miller, Lancaster & R Cann, S Humberdale

## HEROES OF THE LANCE

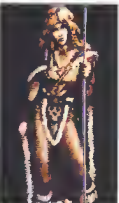
Further to the tips printed in Issue 19, here are some additional tips for the SSI arcade adventure from someone who should know.

Only three of the seventeen spells are needed: Cure Light Wounds, Web (to paralyse dangerous-looking opponents for dissection at leisure), and Dragon Breath (for use against Khasanth).

None of the treasures, poisons, scrolls etc that are found are actually needed.

Fight everything but Hatchlings, run at these and dodge into a door.

Rustin jumps farthest. Save your position before circular doors.



Goldmoon throws her staff at Khasanth (she can't throw it at any other boss); then get a fighter to run past the dying dragon to win.

■ Pete Austin, Level 9 Computing

## FUSION

Bulfinch's version of *Fusion* has a nice little cheat. Load the game, get a high score and then type **SWAMP THING** (including the space) on the high score table. On starting a new game, pressing **T** cycles through the ultra weapons, **B** installs tat bullets, **S** provides shields, and **E** brings up the cheat mode, where levels may now be selected at will by pressing the **+** and **-** keys on the numeric keypad.

■ Thanks to Gerni Corpes, Bulfinch



## MONEY!

TNT gives away up to £250 worth of vouchers each month. If you have any hints, cheats or maps for the LATEST games (Sega and Nintendo included), send them in. You could win a £20 voucher - or even the top prize of £150!

# THE PRESIDENT IS MISSING

THIS TRICKY INVESTIGATIVE GAME HAS PROMPTED SOME USEFUL HINTS. HOPEFULLY, THESE WILL MAKE SENSE TO ANYONE PLAYING THE GAME...

## TERESA BECKWORTH'S MURDER

Teresa worked for Colonel Sebastian Moran, whose activities are unaccounted for the four days June 5-9. Her boyfriend was Jerry Berger. On the back of her chequebook is written "eddy koor raver r als" which means, "I like ravin rock richie".

Note the discrepancy between the President and the President's wife when referring to Lake Kendallwood/Griffin. Also, the common link between many participants of the Special Forces Unit, Vietnam 1968-70.

Further info: Albert Gotzschneider and Khele Schneider went to Cyprus on June 3 for one day before reporting to Otto Darnokweiner. Schatzmann and Mulrony have been transferring funds to Swiss Accounts: Todd Vogel, Stan Ritchie and Ian Schmidt are all helicopter pilots who came through Austrian customs prior to the abduction.

All Agent/State department entries must be in capitals and have a space between the names, eg MORAN, SEBASTIAN.

## CODED MESSAGES

The five Morse Code transmissions are deciphered to the following messages:

- 1 CHARON TO EM HAVE SET EMERALD IN NALLUE
- 2 CQ CQ CQ GAZZAE CQ CQ CQ
- 3 CHARON TO EM OPAL RECEIVED IRBIO
- 4 GEORGEANUS TO DEVILISH RENDEZVOUS 1812 N35 22E
- 5 CHARON TO EM GARNET DELIVERED TUOMUR LHODSU SUPT ALLAAHO

(Or words to that effect.) EM may be Edwin Mulrony.

The sixth 'hidden' message is FOUCHE, tapped out by the French President against the microphone. Fouché can be seen on the photograph 'President As Hostage'.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

### 'President As Hostage'



Fouché is one of the captors. The President's watch may indicate that he's in the Continental United States.

### 'FBI Photo'



The man in the picture is Krasni Medved, he's standing outside Leo Vine's video store, 4109 Bellevue Street.

### 'Staging Area'



The helicopters were taken from the NATO exercise. The AI stands for Amalgamieren Industriell.

### 'Turkish Police Victim'



Last recorded owner of the gun was Saghr Ragoul.

■ Andrew Shorrocks, Lancs

Can anyone provide more information, particularly on the limited access code word? asks.  
the president to...  
After the abduction, the helicopters were available and Otto Darnokweiner provided the nerve gas.  
General Gales made the helicopters available and Otto Darnokweiner provided the nerve gas.  
Moran, Hugh Mahan etc.  
Vigman are entrusted with the operation (General Gales, Leo Vine, Fouché, Schmidt, Vogel, Ritchie, Schatzmann and Mulrony provide the necessary funds, while the President's 'friends' from upon the Middle East terrorist organisations, particularly Ragoul or Fouché.  
The President arranges his own abduction, possibly in conjunction with the USSR to lay blame

## WHAT MAY HAVE HAPPENED

## SEGA STUFF

### GOLVELLIUS

This Sega game is getting on a bit hot, since it hasn't been covered before, here are a few tips to give the quest an added boost.

When entering a code, put the number three as the third digit/letter. This is rewarded by a number of items, money and life potions. The exact result is dependent on the code, so try out different ones.

To find the second demon, slash the central blue stone (about five o'clock). When the demon appears, kill him by waiting for him to stop, then hitting him. Simply keep dodging when he follows.

To find the third demon, hit the gravestone in the top right graveyard above the river (the one in the corner).

To defeat Fobus, aquaboots are needed. These are found by hitting a large palm tree north-west of the beach. Fobus is then found on the Swamp Island. Waric can be beaten by waiting for him to attack, sidestepping and then hitting him.

Jasba may be defeated in the same way, but it is more difficult because of the need to avoid missiles.

Hedi can be beaten by sidestepping, and rapidly slashing (ignoring damage being sustained).

Golvellus is killed by slashing at him, then allowing him to smother while still hitting him. The following code allows you to reach the end of the game. All that is needed is the location of Golvellus, which a fortune teller will divulge.

ZL74 JQKH ZHMS Y3W4  
8USS LV20 AX8D 6ZNO

## WONDERBOY IN MONSTERLAND

Later on in the game, there are large empty walls. These should be knocked on regularly, because there are hidden doors which can be opened.

To get the Guidance Bell, head for the cavern on the second round and knock on the invisible door which lies on the third step above some lava. The woman inside provides a scroll for Catherine.

Go to Barabara and enter the invisible door located next to an ordinary door on a platform above a doorway bearing a cross. The woman provides a Flute.

Go to Fovoro Islands and head right until a tower appears. Climb the tower and blow the Flute. Head right and enter the mansion. Collect the Star Charm from the old geezer.

Next, head for the Undersea Kingdom of Calfish. Head left and enter a shop. Buy something cheap and then re-enter. The catfish should now have the Heroes Emblem. Knock on all the doors until someone offers the Ruby or the Bell. Take the Bell to help negotiate the babyrind.

■ Paul Tootell, Bolton





# ARCHIPELAGOS



Atari ST screen shots

*Imagine a game without violence,  
yet as chilling as abandoned  
places where people have died and  
never returned.*

*Imagine a 3D world, yet the only  
forces are those that come from  
the ground.*

*Imagine the danger of a tormented  
soul, carried aloft by nothing  
greater than the wind.*

*Archipelagos is a completely new  
sort of game. It offers 9,999 living  
landscapes, in 3D, with continuous  
smooth movement and scanning.  
It is so extraordinary it defies  
classification. It is the experience  
of the metaphysical.*

*Archipelagos is conceived and  
coded by Astral Software.*



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# RAMBO III

If there are any butch hard-men (or women) who can't rescue the Colonel and get back to the good ol' US in one piece on the ST, they should play the game and get 5,000 or more to get on the high score table, then type in RENEGADE and press return. Now, when the film artwork is up on screen, press 1, 2 or 3 to start on a chosen level.

## TV SPORTS FOOTBALL

OK, AMIGA OWNERS: INTO A HUDDLE FOR SOME ON-THE-SPOT COACHING FOR MIRRORSOFT'S GRIDIRON GAME:

At the start of the start of the season, give the Left Half Back the Number One rank, and the following statistics: speed 8, strength 4, hands 4, agility 8. This should guarantee a per-game rushing average of around 9 yards per run.

Both receivers should have good hands, although the Right Wide Receiver has the opportunity to run more than the Left, so it's worth giving him a decent speed/rate.

The Quarterback should be ranked at least ninth on the roster, with a fast throw and decent scrambling abilities. Centerbacks need to be fast and agile to cover the opposition's receivers well, and agility ratings of 6 are advisable. Don't bother giving the Outside Linebackers good ratings unless the 3-4 formation is to be used often: they don't appear in the 6-1 formation, and there's only one in the 4-3.

Offensive and defensive Linebackers need only be strong with below average ratings for the other three factors.

Give one of the Inside Linebackers high stats (high speed and strength: 7 or 8), and the other below average ones. Control the higher-ranked LB during the game.

### ★ DEFENSIVE TACTICS

#### Against I-Formation

If the Wide Receiver switches pitch sides, the probability is that it's a pass. Nevertheless, the computer runs more from this formation than from the other two. The 6-1 formation is safe against a run through the centre, but position the Linebackers on either side of the defensive line. With 4-3 or 3-4, move the LBs close to the line.

When choosing the play, take Run Out side, but keep the controlled player close to the Wide Receiver.

#### Against The Shotgun

Nearly always a pass, so pull the LBs away from the line of scrimmage. However, beware of a run to the right, especially when the opposition are close to the endzone. Pass Defence is the selection to combat this play.

#### Against Kicks

Blocking field goals is impossible until they're so low they would miss anyway, so this feature is pointless (hence the computer never attempts this action).

#### Against Pro-Set Formation

Impossible to tell what they're going to do on this snap. When running a 4-3 or 3-4, select a Blitz and hope that they're passing. If in 6-1 formation, select 'Pass Defence' but stay ready for a rush.

#### Against Punts

NEVER run straight at the punter after the snap. It's practically impossible to block the punt and if it's a fake punt, the team can get stranded in the attacker's half, and the computer-controlled defenders will probably fail to stop a pass.

Use the 4-3 in normal and most situations, the 3-4 when more than 15 yards are needed or when the opposition are desperate. Never use the 3-4 inside your own 20 yard line as the extra men are wasted in the small space needed to be covered. Only use 6-1 in extreme short yardage situations.

On the second play-calling screen look across to see the offensive choice (you can easily tell a Shotgun and run outside for either run) Blitz and Run Inside are risky and ponderous. When selecting Pass Defence, select one Inside Linebacker and motion to the right end of the line. After the snap you can quickly reach the QB and sack him. If he does hand off, the runner runs into you and you can get him easily. On the Run Defence, select either Linebreaker and stand directly opposite the QB facing the defensive line. If the play is a run inside, turn right or left and a down tackle stops any gain.

The outside run can also be stopped quickly by the other three Linebackers and yourself. When the QB prepares to pass, you follow the Wide Receiver until he is offscreen (the computer rarely passes off-screen and more players further back can cover him) and then move down to cover any Running Backs who have run out to receive. Before this time however, your other LBs will have sacked the QB.

The computer often throws to a Wide Receiver on the 4th down. Moving the Outside Linebacker back five yards seems to discourage this.

Blitz with Outside Linebackers on a computer Passing Play as this punts the QB into making a poor pass.

Occasionally, the computer QB tries a short pass to the Halfback. To

cover this, mark and follow a receiver with an Inside Linebacker. Once the computer realises what is happening, he may miss his sideline. If he does, tackle him using the Inside Linebreaker. If he attempts the pass, the same Linebreaker should be able to cover this pass.

### ★ OFFENSIVE TACTICS

#### Throwing

Use Shotgun and the bottom right pattern for any distance of throw. Against a Blitz, three receivers are immediately open to catch the pass, while against a Pass Defence the Left Half Back running up behind the Left Wide Receiver is left free to catch the pass after the LWR has drawn all the cover away.

#### Running

Use I-Formation and the top left pattern when running. Here, the Left Half Back gets the ball and can go left as planned, cut back up the middle as two or three gaps open up, or cut across up the right. When Blitzed, dodge up the middle. When an Inside Run defence is used, go up the outside, and vice versa.

#### Short Yardage

Use Pro-Set and the top left pattern, where the Quarterback hands off to the Left Half Back who goes through the gap in the middle to pick up the yards. If the gap is covered or blocked, then go around either side.

#### Long Yardage

Use the throwing offence outlined above and then wait for the receivers to go unheld off screen. The very last Left Wide Receiver and Left Half Back can get free ahead of the defensive backs and a perfectly-timed throw leaves the opposition speechless!

During the first half, passing on short yardage situations running with Quarterback on 2nd and 10 works well. After the first half, anything can happen. On punts, run slightly to one side to give the opposition defender a hard time. Never pass from the Pro-Set or I-Formation, only the Shotgun: this manoeuvre gives about two seconds extra time to pass. Always press fire when tackled to avoid a fumble.

■ Simon Liu, Surrey & Janaka Akers, High Wycombe



## Concerning the Ways of Orcs, Feats of Arms and the Schemes of Sauron in the realms of 8-bit Middle Earth.

**T**he Dark Lord, Sauron, wields great power in Middle Earth and holds under his sway many regiments of foul and bloodthirsty Orcs, yet even Sauron is not unassailable, as those who have read the account of the War of the Ring in Professor Tolkien's book will well know. Those who so choose can make the same decisions as were made in the book and recreate faithfully the footsteps of Frodo Baggins and the Fellowship of the Ring, but you will find that success is by no means certain and that this path, like any other, is fraught with danger. Sauron's plan of war is flexible and changes subtly each time you play the game. Likewise, to succeed, your plan of war must be flexible too.

### IN THE THICK OF BATTLE

In battle, your men will fight where they stand, without further instructions from you, but this is not the best way to kill orcs or to safeguard your warriors. Even in a hopeless situation, your battle tactics will determine just how many orcs are slain in the attempt.

As in most battles, the greatest advantage lies in concentrating your forces. Where one orc is fighting one man, neither has any special advantage apart from their own innate strength and skill. When one orc is fighting two men, the chances of the orc killing a man remain the same but the chances of the men killing the orc increase substantially. For example, if each of the men had a 10% chance of killing the orc individually, fighting together they would have a 18% chance of killing the orc and if there were three of them, it would become a 27% chance. Likewise, two or three orcs fighting just one man gain a considerable advantage.

In battle, then, the main priority is to engage each orc from as many sides as possible and to do this you must try to bring as many of your troops as you can into the front line. Even this task requires some thought. During the early stages of a battle, the orcs will be moving fast across undefended areas to get at your men and there is hardly any front line to speak of. If you mobilize men too close to the orcs, you'll

# WAR IN MIDDLE

Sauron, power in and holds elements Orcs, yet available, said the Ring in will one can as were recreate Frodo ship of ad that certain ally, Sauron's le and ne you to each-est be

OF  
fight further this is or to even in battle now this

great- strateg- is try from and hilling a orc to but is the For ad a ero other ne of vere ne s or na- e.

foi- as do as an asking the ses nor not tra- y'll

find it a waste of time because the orcs will probably attack them anyway. If you mobilize men too far away from the orcs, it will take them a while to journey across the battlefield, and meanwhile the orcs may have moved on or may even have been killed! The best policy is to mobilize nearby men that are not likely to be attacked immediately by the roaming orcs.

The next problem is how to mobilize them: do you use direct control or indirect control? In the early stages of battle, while the orcs are streaming across the battlefield, direct control is the best option. Although you have to alter the warrior to his destination (which sometimes means making detours), you can alter his course according to the flow of battle and don't end up chasing orcs with the pursuit in the later stages of battle, which are generally less fluid, you'll find groups of orcs embroiled in hand-to-hand combat. Since these are relatively static, you'll be able to use indirect control quite effectively.

In the longer battles, you'll have time enough to manoeuvre your troops into battle formations. Due to the ebb and flow of battle and the movements of the orcs, your battle formations will be rough and ready rather than the precise drill formations of parade ground armies, but some formations can be extremely effective and against such deadly pressures as the Nazgûl, fighting in formation is almost essential.

The simplest formation is the straight line of troops. Single orcs encountering your line will always find themselves outnumbered two to one. However, as soon as a horde of orcs throws itself against your line, that slim advantage is lost. Worse still, the orcs are forced into a line too and cannot easily be outflanked. A much more effective tactic is to form a V-shaped funnel into which the attacking orcs are channelled. The deeper into the funnel they march, the easier it gets for you to close the ends of the funnel and surround them. Using this tactic against a lone Nazgûl, it's possible to have four warriors fighting against him simultaneously.

To use formations effectively takes some practice. Not only will

you need dexterity with the joystick, but you will also need some quick thinking if you are to respond in time to the rapid flow of battle, constantly adjusting your formation as sections of your lines get knocked out. But, if you want to play as many orcs as possible, formation fighting is the way to do it.

## THE SCHEMES OF SAURON

As your armies and heroes march through Middle Earth, they will doubtless encounter roving bands of orcs and be forced to battle for their lives. Although the movements of the Enemy's armies always remain hidden, they are not random: there is a pattern to the schemes of Sauron and even a passing knowledge of this pattern is of great value.

Sauron, in his evil wisdom, has divided his armies into two

The campaign plan of Sauron is intricate in its detail and space only permits the broad outlines of his plan to be given here. The Dark Lord has marked out over sixty different objectives for his armies to take and secure. To allow his commanders some flexibility in the field, each objective is followed by two other objectives, either of which the commander can choose to attack as he sees fit. Even the Dark Lord himself cannot say which particular routes his armies will take when the choice arises and here lies the subtlety of his plan, for he knows that the Lady Galadriel has the power to look into his mind and know his thoughts. His plan is flexible enough to be unpredictable but by carefully laying out the spider's web of objectives, he can be sure that his strength is eventually brought to bear against whichever of the

map, though much of the detail has, of necessity, been left out.

There are a number of useful hints given by this plan. Notice, for instance, the two way route through the Mines of Moria. The gate at each end of the Mines of Moria is a further objective from the other gate. Often, this means that a band of orcs will march through the Mines of Moria to the far gate and then, as soon as they reach that objective, select one of the two further objectives which just happen to be the gate they have come from. So, a band of orcs may spend some time just marching back and forth through the Mines. In this way, the Dark Lord keeps the passage through the mountains well patrolled.

Notice also the road through Mirkwood. This is a route for orcs armies, but only for armies passing northwards. Armies found on this road make their way eventually either to Lothlórien or to Rivendell and thence to the Shire, since Sauron has specified no return routes but these.

It is also vital to understand the way the Dark Lord's twisted mind works. Any defeat he suffers blinds him with anger and goads him to seek revenge, distracting him from his master plan. For each army of his that is destroyed, Sauron will send a fresh army to hunt down the victor. Only when vengeance is fulfilled will that army then turn back to Mordor and begin to follow Sauron's campaign plan. The more successful one of your armies is, the more it will be hounded by Sauron. One tactic, knowing this tendency of Sauron's, is to draw off Sauron's strength by marching a successful army into the wilderness, with a trail of evenging bands of orcs doggedly following it.



groups: the assault armies and the hunting armies. The hunting armies roam Middle Earth tracking down particular individuals. The Dark Lord, for instance, has assigned to three Nazgûl the task of hunting down Gandalf. The assault armies follow Sauron's complex campaign plan which assigns them each a series of objectives to take before the final assault on Minas Tirith itself.

Even Saruman and the orcs he controls have a part to play in the Dark Lord's plans, but Saruman's assault armies follow a separate campaign plan with more limited objectives, the bounds of their movements lying largely within Rohan and Gondor.

strongholds he desires most.

The final destination in Sauron's web of objectives is Minas Tirith, but before reaching this goal his armies can range far and wide, from Dol Amroth in the south to Dale in the far north, from the fair glades of Lothlórien to the Grey Havens in the west. Where the web is thickest, the armies of Sauron are more likely to be found. There are three main areas that Sauron concentrates on: the villages of the Shire in the north, the Irlongs of Helm's Deep, Del Amroth and Minas Tirith to the west of Mordor, and the towers and fortresses of Mordor itself. The broad sweep of Sauron's plan is shown on the

NEXT MONTH

MIKE SINGLETON'S GUIDE TO MIDDLE EARTH  
PART 2

Previously Told of Past Times are told, and the Fate of the Ringbearer is made known...

# MIDDLE EARTH

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#### Computer and Video Games

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#### Geoff Minter,

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(The PC Engine is no fantasy)

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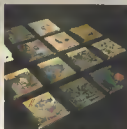
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# ROBOCOP

Oh dear! The last C64 Robocop listing didn't seem to work too well past the first level. As compensation, here's a fully working listing which allows the tin copper to go rampaging all the way through to Level Seven (which may be corrupted - you have been warned). Type it in, RUN it and load Robocop from tape.

```
10 FOR X=348 TO 439: READY: C=C+Y: POKE X,Y: NEXT
20 F C=11644 THEN SYS 348
30 PRINT "ERROR IN DATA"
40 DATA 169, 128, 133, 157, 32, 86, 245, 169, 32, 141, 84, 3
50 DATA 169, 118, 141, 85, 3, 169, 1, 141, 86, 3, 96, 72
60 DATA 77, 80, 72, 169, 96, 141, 147, 172, 141, 104, 173, 169
70 DATA 142, 141, 243, 246, 169, 1, 141, 244, 246, 104, 173, 32
80 DATA 208, 96, 169, 62, 141, 39, 142, 169, 185, 141, 40, 142
90 DATA 169, 96, 141, 110, 176, 141, 36, 177, 169, 173, 141, 169
100 DATA 185, 169, 1, 141, 170, 185, 76, 0, 128, 169, 96, 141
110 DATA 221, 167, 141, 164, 168, 76, 0, 128
```

■ The Master Hacker

## INCREDIBLE SHRINKING SPHERE

As if those wonderful ISS maps we printed in Issue 19 weren't enough, C64 owners can now play the game with infinite everything, if they like.

Lines 80-100 are optional. 80 gives infinite lives. 90 infinite ammunition, and 100 an immediate, infinite shield. Type in all the other lines, RUN the listing and load ISS from tape.

```
10 X=524
20 READY: IF Y<256 THEN 50
30 SYS 524
```

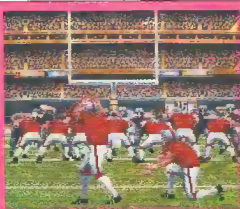
```
40 POKE X,Y: X=X+1: GOTO 30
50 DATA 169, 128, 133, 157, 32,
86, 245, 169, 35, 141, 242, 2
60 DATA 169, 2, 141, 243, 2, 96,
72, 77, 80, 169, 46, 141
70 DATA 20, 5, 169, 2, 141, 21, 5,
76, 0, 4
80 DATA 169, 173, 141, 102, 153
90 DATA 169, 165, 141, 138, 160
100 DATA 169, 165, 141, 145, 154,
141, 0, 160, 169, 1, 133, 81
110 DATA 76, 9, 128, 256
```

■ The Master Hacker

## XENON

No doubt there are a million other games crashing their teeth at this amazingly difficult shock-em-up. Try pausing the game (that's the BREAK key, not SHIFT as it says in the instruction book) and pressing the F, J, K and Y keys all together. Easy now, mm?

■ Steve Haw, Smettwick



## TVSF: THE CHEAT

For all the less scrupulous Amiga owners who haven't got time to practice their art, here's a listing which enables individual players' attributes to be altered at will.

Type in the listing and save it to REEL 2 (at this point, we would like to remind you that ACE does not accept liability for any damage to original game disks caused by using this cheat - upon your own heads be it).

Simply RUN the program to allow the attributes on disk to be altered. NOTE: To change Anaheim, the first letter of the QB's name must be substituted for a 'r' mark (don't ask - just do it!).

```
CLEAR, 1024: CLEAR, 30000
DIM NMS(18), ATU(8)
STAR-OPEN "DFO:STAT/DTAT" FOR INPUT AS I
AS=INPUT$(LOF(1))CLOSE I
PT1 CLS: INPUT "WHAT IS THE NAME OF YOUR TEAM'S QUARTERBACK?"; NMS
PRINT "PLEASE WAIT...": FOR I=1 TO LEN(NMS)
IF ASC(MID$(NMS,I,1))=ASC(MID$(NMS,I,1)) THEN GOTO PT1A
FLAG=0: FOR J=1 TO LEN(NMS)
IF ASC(MID$(NMS,J,1))=ASC(MID$(NMS,J,1)) THEN FLAG=FLAG+1
NEXT J: IF FLAG<>LEN(NMS) THEN GOTO PT1A ELSE GOTO PT2
PT1A NEXT: PRINT "QUARTERBACK NOT FOUND - PLEASE TRY AGAIN!"
WHILE INKEYS="" WEND: GOTO PT1
PT2 FOR J=1 TO 18: SST=I+(J-1)*25: NMS(I)=MID$(SST,17) NEXT J
FOR J=1 TO 4: FOR K=1 TO 18: SST=I+(450+(J-1)*18+K-1)
ATK(J)=ASC(MID$(SST,11))NEXT K NEXT J
PT3 CLS: LOCATE 1,1: PRINT "NAME": LOCATE 1,37: PRINT "SPEED"
LOCATE 1,47: PRINT "STRENGTH": LOCATE 1,57: PRINT "HANDS"
LOCATE 1,67: PRINT "ABILITY"
FOR J=1 TO 16: LOCATE J+2,1: PRINT J: LOCATE J+2,5: PRINT "NMS(J)"
LOCATE J+2,40: PRINT ATU(J): LOCATE J+2,50: PRINT ATU(2)
LOCATE J+2,60: PRINT ATU(3): LOCATE J+2,70: PRINT ATU(4): PRINT J: NEXT J
INPUT "Change, I (save) or Q (quit)"; QS
IF QS<>"I" AND QS<>"Q" THEN GOTO PT3
IF QS="I" THEN GOTO PT4
IF QS="Q" THEN GOTO PT1
INPUT "What is the number of the player to be changed?"; NNU
INPUT "What attribute do you want to change? (speed=1, strength=2, etc)"; AAT
INPUT "What do you want to change it to? (1-81)"; NUA
ATIN(NNU,AAT)=NUA: GOTO PT3
PT4 BS=BS+MOD$(AS,2)-450-1
FOR J=1 TO 4: FOR K=1 TO 18: BS=BS+CHR$(ATK(J))NEXT K NEXT J
BS=BS+RIGHT$(AS,LEN$(AS)-1)+72+1
OPEN "DFO:STAT/DTAT" FOR OUTPUT AS I: WRITE #1, BS: CLOSE I: GOTO STAR
```

■ Charly Allen, Suffolk

Because of this month's mega-feature on War in Middle Earth, there's no £150 prize winner (well, Mike Singleton doesn't need the cash). Instead, there are now six £20 vouchers up for grabs. And in reverse order (the lucky recipients are: Charly Allen, Suffolk; Daniel Russell, Wool; Simon Liu, Surrey; Janaka Atiyi, High Wycombe; Andrew Shorrocks, Melton; and Richard Davis of Woodside Park, London. Thanks very much and well done to all of you.

And many thanks, too, to everyone else who sent in tips. Keep them coming: you know it makes sense!

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# BUDGET

The bargain basement section of this month's Screen Test has a distinct gambling flavour about it, with a package of gambling games, a one-armed bandit simulator and some pinballing action. The Titanic had a casino, too. Probably.

SCREEN  
ELEMENT

## LAS VEGAS CASINO

**ZEPPELIN • C64 • £2.99**

This one isn't quite as pointless as a fruit machine, since because card and dice games can be enjoyed for their own sake. This features four games: blackjack, baccarat, roulette and craps (stop juggling at the back, it's a dice game and you know it).

Each game is played with the computer as the house. The simplest is blackjack (ponton) but the other three take quite a lot of knowledge of the rules in order to bet intelligently.



These are not very well explained, though, so players who don't know how to play baccarat or craps will have problems.

The only aim is to make money so there's no motivation except the enjoyment of the games themselves. The graphics are very ordinary except for a nice end screen when all the money has been lost.

**■ ACE RATING 476**

## TITANIC

**KIXX • Spectrum, Amstrad • £1.99**

The pride of the Blue Star line now lies in its form, one mile below the surface of the Arctic



ocean. Remote droids have pinpointed the great ship, but its secrets have remained a mystery, until now.

A new pressure-resistant diving suit has been developed which allows some brave person to actually swim down to the wreck and this is where the player comes in. Armed with a harpoon gun and a limited number of harpoons, a snail-paced diver must be guided through a labyrinthine cave system which is inhabited by all manner of dangerous aquatic beasts. Any contact with fish, squid,

anemones etc causes the diver to lose oxygen from his tank, which can be replenished by picking up extra tanks. However, meeting a shark at close quarters is instantly fatal, death sees the mission restart from the cave entrance.

Having escaped the caves a password is provided to allow access to the second level, which begins inside the wreck of the Titanic. The diver's aim is to locate switches to open doors, find some explosives and blow a safe full of valuables, while avoiding a sinister group of hostiles from the previous level.

Control of the diver is a little haphazard, and the game is of the simple search 'n' destroy type. Once mapped out, it shouldn't take too long to finish, but having said this, Titanic does provide a reasonable challenge along the way.

**■ ACE RATING 587**

## ADVANCED PINBALL SIMULATOR

**CODEMASTERS • C64 • £2.99**

As pinball games go - and there haven't been many on the C64 of late - Codemasters' entry to the genre is pretty good. The ever-important



ball movement is realistic, and it plays in a similar fashion to Time Scanner, in that specific features must be hit up to exit the screen.

In this manner, a magic book appears and is opened by crossing letters in rollover lanes, a potion is made to bubble and a Wizard's castle is slowly removed by hitting switches, and a forest barring the exit is partially demolished on contact with the ball. Access to the next stage is finally achieved by clearing the screen and hitting the exit volcano.

Unfortunately, there is only one screen to complete, which doesn't really offer much of an attraction to extended play. A 'tilt' function is sadly lacking, and there are a couple of bugs which make the ball fall through hoppers and barriers, or even go sailing out of the play area.

Although the game's certainly enjoyable for the first few goes, the urge to play should disappear once the 'table' has been played through a couple of times.

**■ ACE RATING 595**

## SUPERNUDGE 2000

**MASTERTRONIC • Spectrum, Amstrad • £2.99**

Of all the ridiculous things to do a simulation of, fruit machines are by far the dumbest. The WHOLE point of fruit machines is to win money: take the cash away, and they are almost entirely redundant.

However, experience has shown that there are people prepared to shell out hard cash for them. On the Amstrad, this one is very colourful but the reels are awfully slow. It also does

not have as many features as the Spectrum. The Spectrum looks much worse but at least it has fast reels and lots going on all the time.

Basically this is computer entertainment for vegetables. Sit and watch the pretty reels spin round and jump for joy as they come to a halt on three lemons: or could it possibly just be one big lemon?

**■ ACE RATING 312**

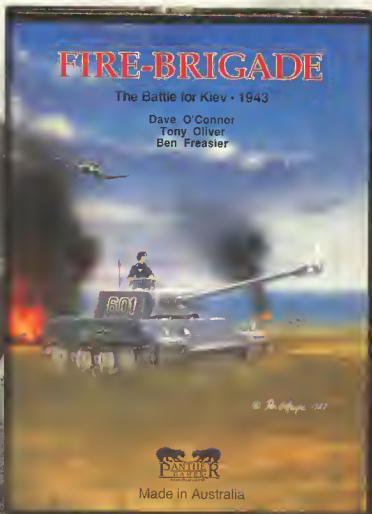


# Win the battle for Kiev

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Dave O'Connor  
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### RAMPAGE

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### CYBORG HUNTER

The year 2242 you are Paladin, the toughest bounty hunter in the galaxy. Mastermind Cyborgs are threatening to take control of the Universe under the direction of their evil leader, Vortex. Your mission is to gain access to Vortex's chambers and destroy him. Sound easy enough? It isn't!

Relentlessly exciting arcade adventure, action-packed! C+VG, March 1989



### Y's

You are Ann Christian, a beautiful young woman who by her night and day of a heroine. You were found and freed by a kind and heroic technician and he restored your health. The living village at the edge of the great plain. Perhaps the distance was a vast of incredible range with an ominous view of a peak. That is the town of the Desert. The folkman told you as they made the way at the end of the day. It is the place where the trouble of our land begins. As you walk on the lower, you know that your destiny awaits there.

The whole thing based on the best - the best I've seen on the Sega. It's intense depth and playability and we're so impressed for weeks. It's a must! C+VG, March 1989



# UPDATES



## BATTLEHAWKS 1942

LUCASFILM/US GOLD £24.99dk • PC version reviewed Issue 17 • ACE rating 928

Flying a Grumman F4F-4 20,000 ft above your aircraft carrier in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, you suddenly spot them: two Japanese torpedo planes, protected by two Zero fighters, closing rapidly in on the carrier.

That's a typical mission in this action-packed combat flight sim, where the emphasis is heavily on the combat side of things. As a pilot with either the Americans or Japanese, you can fly three types of plane – fighter, dive-bomber and torpedo – and participate in some thirty-two missions, divided amongst four of the major battles of the Pacific war.

Before attempting any of the missions (which range in difficulty from easy, through moderate and hard, to – impossible!) it's always a good idea to practise flying the war era planes first. Staying in the air is easy, but hitting a carrier deck with a bomb from 2,000 ft is not so easy.

Once you start playing for real, and without using the options for unlimited fuel and ammunition and impenetrable armour (after your plane in any way and your service

record is not updated, so you don't stand any chance of winning medals) you may find the enemy planes a little tough, so you can alter the experience level of the enemy pilots, making them slower to react, and less accurate when firing back, to give yourself a fighting chance.

There are a host of views – both from within the cockpit and from outside, if you select to record some of your missions using the on-board camera, and then watch the playback – and on the whole, if you enjoy flying around blasting enemy planes out of the

sky, you'll find *Battlehawks* very satisfying.

### AMIGA VERSION

Terrific fast and colourful graphics plus some impressive and atmospheric sound effects all combine to ensure you'll keep coming back to this again and again.

■ ACE RATING 935

### ATARI ST VERSION

Graphics are just as good, so is the gameplay. Highly recommended for flying, shooting, bombing and torpedoing fans.

■ ACE RATING 930

## ULTIMA V

MICROPROSE £24.95 dk • PC version reviewed Issue 13 • ACE rating 928

This monster game kept RPGers countryside wandering with bated breath for a long time, but once it arrived almost everyone agreed it was well worth the wait.

You control a party of adventurers roaming the countryside of

the land of Britannia in search of...erm... adventure. The main quest in the game is to wander into the recently-discovered Underworld and find out what happened to the party of adventurers led by Lord British (who has been abducted



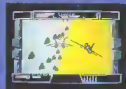
## AMIGA

### AFTERBURNER

ACTIVISION £24.99dk

Atari ST version reviewed Issue 16 – ACE rating 587

Undoubtedly the best of all the versions, that still isn't saying much. Some nice



sampled speech accompanies the action, which is fast and colourful. Sadly the gameplay lets everything down again: lots of aim-as-flying-around that requires little skill.

■ ACE RATING 606

### CRAZY CARS II

TTTUS £24.99dk

ST version reviewed Issue 15 – ACE rating 755



Apart from a subtler palette, police sirens and a beautifully smooth scrolling map, *Crazy Cars II* compares exactly to the ST release. Road and car movement slightly less smooth than its predecessor, but this does little to impair the gameplay on offer.

■ ACE RATING 755

### PRISON

CHRYSALIS £19.99dk

ST version reviewed Issue 20 – ACE rating 764

Vertical in look, feel and play to the Atari version, with the added advantage of only one game disk. Although sound is adequate, the Amiga isn't given the chance to show off its musical prowess, save for pleasant loading tune.

■ ACE RATING 764

### VICTORY ROAD

IMAGINE £24.95dk

Amstrad version reviewed Issue 18 – ACE rating 642

Not an impressive offering on the Amiga, graphics don't make the most of it.



UPDATES

The game play is straight-up commando style. The additional weapons are good, but basically it's better than it was in the 8-bit versions.

■ ACE RATING 642

## ATARI ST

### ROAD BLASTERS

US GOLD £19.99dk

C64 version reviewed Issue 12 - ACE rating 654

The 8-bit versions never quite managed to emulate the feel of the car cop, but on the ST a much more game as emerged. The feeling of movement on the road is more convincing and the control of the car is much easier making driving a pleasurable experience.

The new levels are quite easy, so as a nice introduction. By level 12 the car is hitted up and it becomes a real challenge so it's all over to ease things and then provide a long drive.

The graphics are colourful and detail. The explosions add things in the air. The engine noises are suitably revved up. The sound is the same, partially slow down as on the C64, but at least it's more during the action. A high quality sound which will please fans of the old and new. Ardes.

■ ACE RATING 775

## SPECTRUM

### CAPTAIN BLOOD

EXXOS £9.95 cs £14.95 dk

ST version reviewed Issue 7 - ACE rating 867

It's been a long while coming, but the Spectrum interpretation of Intergames' (now Exxos) Captain Blood has finally landed. From the inevitable cosmetic differences, the game retains the same look as the arcade player landing sequence. The representation of the adventure aspects is intact, in fact, the only real difference is that the 8-bit incarnations, due to lack of mouse control for which the game was primarily designed.

■ ACE RATING 863

### ELIMINATOR

HEWSON £9.99 cs £14.99 dk

ST version reviewed Issue 13 - ACE rating 904

Now the Spectrum version gives you the 3D nature of the game, the plot is clear and makes a difficult difference between the solid objects and the enemies. The coarser update allows the precision which the ST version is enjoying.

■ ACE RATING 755

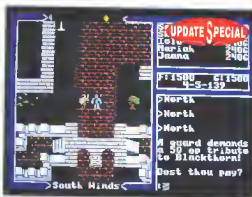
### PACLAND

GRANDSLAM £8.95 cs £12.95 dk

The Spectrum version of this musical variant follows the arcade game pretty

as well, so things in Britannia aren't as wonderful as they might be now the new government's in power. Like all good adventure RPGs, though, there are numerous sub-quests for you to take or leave, and plenty of fights with evil trolls and the like to get involved in. There are loads of people to interact with - some of whom you can recruit - and once you start to play you'll find life becomes less black-and-white and simple and far more grey and complicated. There are twists and turns to the game that keep you on your toes constantly and you can never trust anyone completely.

The graphics are simple - an overhead view of a character representing your party - but the whole game world is surprisingly believable. The whole Ultima series is good, but V is the best yet. There's plenty to keep you playing



for months and if you've never done yourself a favour by getting a copy of this, the game that could bring adventuring out of its ghetto

#### ST VERSION

The graphics are spartan (even a PC can do better). The terrific game play grips and holds you

■ ACE RATING 935

# DOUBLE DRAGON

MELBOURNE HOUSE £19.99dk

The monster arcade hit spread conversions to all formats, and the two recent 16-bit releases profit most from the operation.

Faced with the standard kidnapped girlfriend scenario, two players are charged with fighting their way through five levels of ninjas in order to reach the leader's HQ and rescue said girl.

A variety of warriors crawl out of the woodwork in order to inflict bodily damage upon the do-gooding duo, but the brothers acquit themselves well by using a series of kicks, punches and overhead throws. Should an assailant drop a



## UPDATE SPECIAL

weapon, one of the Luss may pick it up and continue the battle more favourably equipped.

#### ST VERSION

Unbelievably easy, the ST version was completed at the first sitting in one player mode. Irrespective of any aesthetic factors, this makes Double Dragon a total waste of time and money.

■ ACE RATING 275

#### AMIGA VERSION

Smooth scrolling and faster gameplay make this more comfortable than the Atari. However, it's only made slightly harder by dint of hazards on the final level and should similarly be avoided.

■ ACE RATING 286

# EMLYN HUGHES INTERVIEW

AUDIOGENIC £9.95cs, £14.95dk

Crazy Horse is better known these days for game shows than football, but, for a game, being associated with somebody who has boundless enthusiasm is no bad thing.

What most football games fail to achieve is the balance between strategy and arcade action. Here there is not only plenty of on-field action to keep the player occupied, but important off-field decisions have to be taken too. This is mainly a matter of picking the team, which becomes most relevant

when playing a long season, because players rise and affect the team's performance.

The 3D side-view of the pitch is a familiar one for football games, as are the horizontal scrolling and the player selection method. The range of features during a game is impressive: sidestepping, barging back heels, heading, sliding tackles, free kicks, corners, throw-ins, penalties and the ability to control kicking height and direction. The best part about this being that you can actually use all

these easily, and are not forced to perform half-a-dozen joystick movements.

There are also umpteen options for altering the game, such as having two players against the computer, an infinite goal, cup or league competitions, substitutes, 10 skill levels and so on.

All in all, this is an extremely thorough game that provides stiff competition to Microprose Soccer for the title of best football game around.

● Bob White



...ly lacking only... four and some decent collision detection. The conop was not really that hot in the first instance, but... andism have produced a fruitful and playable conversion which might have more of an appeal to younger gamers

■ ACE RATING 690

## PC

### BILLIARDS SIMULATOR

ERE INTERNATIONAL £19.95dk

Amiga version reviewed Issue 13 - ACE rating 619

...ry bit as good as the Amiga version both graphically and in gameplay. The same wide range of options for changing gravity and the table specs too. It's not as interesting as 3D Pool, but it's a lot of fun

■ ACE RATING 619

### DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

OCEAN £19.95dk

Amiga version reviewed Issue 16 - ACE rating 680

...leen's aged Daley licence was resurrected with the appearance of DTCC late last year on all the major formats. Now with the release of the PC version the set is complete. The tedious 'joystick waggling' gameplay is still in evidence, compounded by reliance upon an analogue joystick or... plays PC DTCC also suffers from predictably poorer graphics and more importantly, a ridiculous game structure which is crippled by vast amounts of disk swapping

■ ACE RATING 474

### STAR GOOSE

LOGOTRON £24.95dk CGA, £29.95dk EGA

Atari ST version reviewed Issue 13 - ACE rating 517

An excellent conversion with some superb graphics: lots of detail and smooth vertical scrolling too. The gameplay is virtually identical to the ST, probably under-rated in the original review. It still hasn't got enough variety, but it's a good example of what is possible on a PC, even if the EGA price is a little bit steep

■ ACE RATING 614

### TECHNOCOP

GREMLIN £19.99dk

Spectrum version reviewed Issue 16 - ACE rating 804

...looks good but unfortunately is very slow, particularly in EGA. The keyboard response is sluggish, particularly noticeable when exploring the buildings. The gameplay remains intact despite the slowness, but it's not as enjoyable as previous versions

■ ACE RATING 703



## FUSION

ELECTRONIC ARTS £24.95dk ● Amiga version reviewed Issue 15 ● ACE rating 607

Gleefully claiming to be nothing more than a computer game (no pretentious scenario rubbish here) Fusion sets the player off on the task of visiting a series of landscapes, collecting keys to unlock sections of maze, and attempting to gather the separate sections of a large bomb. To facilitate the negotiation of some mazes, the player's craft splits into a hovering mothership and a land-based crawler, which are used individually but in conjunc-

tion with each other

Each level is littered with enemy gun emplacements, missile silos and hostile vehicles, which sustain a constant barrage of fire. However, both of the player's craft are fitted with blasters and all enemy craft and installations can be destroyed.

Thankfully, Bullfrog have redesigned Fusion, tailoring it to the ST's capabilities rather than trying to emulate the game as it appeared on the Amiga. This has

worked to the game's benefit, and so it is now more playable than its Commodore counterpart, but certainly no easier.

### ST VERSION

The alien levels now scroll vertically only, but they retain the terrific parallax effect and are just as colourful as the Amiga's. Sound is limited to a cacophony of gunshots and explosions, which grows tiresome after a while.

■ ACE RATING 712

## INTERNATIONAL SOCCER



### SPECTRUM VERSION

The graphics obviously are not so good, but despite being small they do the job nicely. Sound effects are in a similar vein to the C64. In gameplay they are very close: both versions are very easy to get to grips with.

■ ACE RATING 887

### CGA VERSION

The graphics are the blocky variety expected of the CGA but they are functional. The sound effects are limited but all you need are a roaring crowd and a few ball and whistle effects.

■ ACE RATING 887

# NAVY MOVES



ILLUSTRATION: JAMES W. COLE



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**P**rofessional Draw has been designed as a partner to Professional Page, one of the main DTP programs for the Amiga, also from Gold Disk. The layout of the screen reflects this, menus, status bar and ruler across the top; ruler on the left, and tool palette on the right, using the chunky icons required by the Amiga's multiple resolutions. In the efficient way of most good WIMP programs, the frequently-used tools – freehand draw, text, polygon, ellipse, scale, rotate, distort, mirror, magnify, marquee, pointer, etc – are all icons on show, the modifying requesters are accessed by double clicks on the icons; and filing, printing, colour or line-weight changes, preferences and other less immediate tasks are all menu-driven.

Since Pro Draw is an object-oriented drawing system employing both bitmap and structured drawing techniques, it gives us a good opportunity to define our terms. The drawing method we all know and love from our familiar paint programs is **bitmapped** – the drawing area is a map or grid of thousands of pixels all the same size, each of which can be any one of the available colours. Every mark that is made changes the colour of a group of pixels and hence the map. If the image is saved to disk, or transformed in any way, ALL of the pixels in the map must be stored or acted upon, even if only three pixels on an otherwise blank screen are changed.

An **object-oriented** program, by contrast, ignores the background. It is only concerned with the changed parts of the screen, the objects. Each of these is stored separately in memory and can be affected independently on screen – moved, sized, overlaid or brought to the front – just like cut-out pieces of paper. Most games use similar bitmap sections, animated to become sprites.

In many DTP programs, the objects are either blocks of text or sections of bitmapped images. Unfortunately, when bitmapped images are printed they retain the resolution or dot size used to produce them. Even on the best computers, this 'grain size' is quite coarse. Similarly, if a bitmapped object is transformed, the original graininess is retained unless very sophisticated (and very slow) smoothing techniques are used. One look at the output from

Over the last few months, references to 'structured' and 'object-oriented' drawing systems have begun to crop up with increasing frequency. By now, you may well be asking yourself "What objects – which orientals?" Many people have little or no idea what the concepts behind these words have to offer or how important they may become in the future. The arrival of PROFESSIONAL DRAW, the ultimate example of object-oriented drawing on the Amiga, gives Brian Larkman a chance to explain...

# ORIENTAL OBJECTS

any normal drawing program on almost any printer – dot matrix, inkjet, laser or wax-transfer – is evidence that there must be a better way. Areas that have been scaled up or down lose detail and gain chunkiness, even when anti-aliasing or smoothing have been applied. Even simple transformations, like rotation or perspective distortion, result in a disproportionately great loss of clarity.

What is required is a method that utilises the maximum resolution of the display or printing method available independent of resolution. With a **structured** system, one that uses **vectors**, these defects just do not happen.

A vector is a line that is described in terms of its length AND its direction. In most vector graphic drawing systems, this is achieved by defining both ends of the line as a set of coordinates, either x and y for a 2D system or x, y and z for 3D. The advantages of this approach are threefold. First of all, it is economical of memory: only the data referring to two points in a line have to be described or saved to disk, the others are created each time the line is drawn. Second, the data relating to a particular object can be easily transformed, ie offset, rotated, scaled, distorted. Third, nothing is committed to the screen permanently: any object or point can be selected independently and its attributes changed.

To sum up, graphic images can be of two types: bitmapped or structured. Bitmapped images are easy to produce, but difficult to change without losing detail. Vector (structured) images are difficult to produce, but easy to change, regardless of resolution. Object-oriented systems can use both types of image and can therefore always take advantage of the most appropriate method.

## TEXAS

One of the main claims of *Pro Draw*'s object-oriented system is its ability to trace over a bitmap image, so perhaps a trial illustration using this technique might show up the program's strengths and weaknesses. The picture chosen was of the four heads of Glasgow band, Texas. Each head was treated in a different way. Some of the problems encountered are described below.

This was originally a high-resolution, interlaced, 16-greytone digitised picture of the band Texas. *Pro Draw* reduced the tones to four and scaled it to fit the page. For this reason, it takes a long time to appear on screen initially, or to redraw. Head 1 has been left exactly as the original. Head 2 was traced using the free-hand tool with a four-point-width line. Head 3



shows the range of greys available, layered one above another. Zooming in on the bitmap allows a very high degree of control of the line, but a trace would have saved a lot of trouble. Editing was made more difficult by the problems of layering each of the tones correctly. Head 5 is not a member of the band, just Head 4 cloned and its colour and line thickness attributes changed.

## PROFESSIONAL CRAWL

Diving straight in and loading a bitmap, the first thing you will notice is that it is incredibly slow. Arriving on screen. To be fair, this is a problem with all object-oriented systems – even on the Mac II. *Freehand* seems to take forever to redraw an image – nevertheless, *Pro Draw* is too slow. The manual agrees that bitmaps slow the action and describes a strategy to speed things up: mainly, to avoid scrolling. Like most good drawing systems, *Pro Draw* operates in a draft as well as WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) mode. This also helps, because it suppresses redraw of the bit image.

## TOOLS

Most of the editing tools are quite ordinary in operation, except for distort, which is rather unusual and interesting. Selecting the distort icon places a rectangular box around any

selected objects. This box is itself a better object. Dragging any one of its points curves the edges connected to that point. The manual evokes the effect of the action perfectly.

"Think of the rectangle as a rubber sheet on which the object is printed. As a side or corner of the sheet is pulled, the shape of the object is distorted."

## TEXT

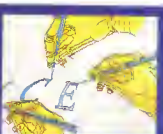
*Pro Draw* is not intended to be primarily a text handling system: *Professional Page* is for that. Nevertheless, it has two fonts available that are structured and therefore easy to manipulate. The fonts provided – with and without serifs – both look good on screen, but they suffer from one fundamental flaw. The apparent holes within letters such as a, b, d, or e are not transparent: they are, in fact, objects drawn in the background (paper) colour and layered above the main letter. This limitation is especially annoying if the text sits above a fairly detailed object, as is the case in the "Texas" illustration.

## TRIAL BY SEPARATION

Although colour has always been difficult, expensive or just impossible to output from a drawing program (as opposed to a page layout program), the current generation of packages provides full-colour facilities so that high-quality



*Professional Draw* in Draft mode, which allows quicker re-draw of the image when changes are made.



The same illustration in WYSIWYG mode, but without interlacing. Note the considerably lower quality than...



...in full interlaced mode, which produces much cleaner lines without stepping, although the Blicher can annoy.



# GRAPHIC ACCOUNTS

images that are destined to be professionally printed can be colour separated. The cyan, magenta, yellow and black components of each shade are printed out separately. Professional Draw can produce these separations, but problems are created by the limited - and varying - range of colours available for on-screen display.

Using the Amiga's highest resolution to give the most accurate representation on-screen means that only 16 colours from 4000 can be used at once. Nine of these - black through seven greys to white - are set and unchangeable, leaving just seven for the user. This is not quite as limiting as it seems, because for colour separation and colour printing each object can be assigned almost any one of the Amiga's 4000 colours, regardless of what colour appears on screen. Nevertheless, using just seven colours to represent all the tones required can present a real hindrance to efficient drawing, if a range of realistic matching tones are required. The problem is not helped by the manual which provides only very terse instructions and only one limited textual example.

Head 4 in 'Texas' was an attempt at introducing flesh tones, it failed because too many screen colours had been introduced. The program seems to offer no method of removing colours from the palette, though once there they can be changed (not the names though - hence a white face labelled as pink).

## LAYERING

Fundamental to the object-oriented system of drawing is the idea of layering. Each object is in effect a 2D slice of image, and like paper cutouts, the slices can sit on top of each other. The ability to move these slices up and down through the pile can make this drawing method very easy because it eliminates any worries about which part of the image is in front of other parts. New objects can be pushed back as far as necessary. Pro Draw provides the ability to change the stack by pushing or pulling any object to the back or front. At times this can be a little confusing and lots of shuffling is needed. A numbering system for layers, or more simply the ability to push and pull by just one layer would be perfect.

## CONCLUSIONS

The arrival of Professional Draw is an important development for the Amiga and for other semi-professional micros like the Alan ST and Acorn Archimedes, because it points the way forward in the future. Similar software has been available for more expensive systems - especially the Macintosh - for some time, but the Amiga obviously has a high enough profile now for developers to provide this level of support. It is only a matter of time before the ST is similarly provided for.

Professional Draw still has a long way to go before it can rival or even approach Mac products like Freehand 2, Illustrator 88 or Superpaint, but then so has Professional Page. Nevertheless, it has some worthwhile and unique attributes, especially the distort tool. If colour were easier to use and included patterned and shaded fills, if layering were more controllable, if text tools were transparent, and if it could autotrace around bitmaps, it would most likely be a winner.

That's an awful lot of ifs, though. ■

A sharp step on the wrist from our illustrious editor - or the telephone equivalent - reminds me that Graphic Accounts has been neglected of late, so here's a round-up of graphics products that have hit our desk running.

### ■ Deluxe Paint III

(Electronic Arts, Langley Business Centre, 11-40 Station Road, Langley N. Slough, Berks SL3 8VN tel 0753 49442) is in fact one of the most recent new products, but it is so good that it has to go straight to top of the heap. Would you believe, to quote, "...paint



and animation in one incredible tool." For once, the hype is mostly true. The latest version of the best-selling paint program for the Amiga is greatly improved and includes what must be the easiest to use animation tools yet. Almost any transformation of a 2D brush can be animated, including moving in the z dimension. Best of all, an animated object can be picked up exactly like a normal brush end then painted anywhere on screen. A full review is under way: DP III is multi-tasking even as I write.

■ Aegis (HB Marketing, 22 The Green, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 7PQ tel 0895 444433) have been working away hard for the Amiga too over the last six months, developing animation and presentation software that extends the VideoScape range. VideoScape 3D Version 2 has been around for quite a few months but only

recently has there been time to have a good look. A great improvement on the original, it now supports PAL, HAM mode, smooth rounding, chrome surfaces, extra colour in the regular mode, extra half-bit support, hierarchical motion and easier operation with new menu options. It is still not easy to use though, especially when modelling objects, so Aegis have thoughtfully provided the following:

■ **Modeler 3D** (HB Marketing) is a 3D object modelling and generation system that is designed to support VideoScape 3D though it produces objects that can be used with most other rendering systems on the Amiga. Almost every imaginable conventional modelling tool has been provided, plus the ability to create camera and object motion files.

■ **Lightst Camera! Action!** (HB Marketing) is the easy-to-use Aegis did not be left out of the Desktop Presentation arena and it combines a number of features that put it on a par with the rest of the competition. It allows IFF pictures, 'anim' animations, and 'Sonix' instruments and music to be combined to produce polished desktop video presentations. It includes over 40 special effects such as wipes, fades, dissolves etc and is designed to work with the SuperGen genlock for smooth dissolve effects.

■ **Moviemaker from Gold Disk** (HB Marketing) is in some ways similar to Lightst Camera! Action! (LCA) but it is designed, as its title suggests, to let you see what you animate as you produce the animation. Using an on-screen storyboard, Moviemaker makes it easy to move through the animation, editing sections and playing them back to see the results immediately. Included with the program is a supply of 'movie clip-art' and stereo sound samples that let you start directing straight away. A full review will follow soon!

■ **The Cyber Series** for the ST from Antic and Electric Distribution (Meadow Lane, St. Ives, Cambs PE17 4LG) has also been growing at an alarming rate. So much so that we will have to be doing a feature on the whole range in the near future. Just to be getting on with are *Cyber Sculpt* and *Cyber Texture*, both designed to work with *Cyber Studio* (reviewed ACE 4). *Sculpt* allows objects to be treated as if they were malleable, like lumps of clay.

"...pushed, pulled, and pummelled into endless shapes." It seems to be very easy to use, the only limitation being the number of colours that a standard ST can display. *Texture* transforms *Degas*, *HyperPaint* or *Neochrome* pictures, or *CyberPaint* animations into *Cyber Studio* CAD3D objects. Any painting or animation can thus be wrapped around any extruded, spun, or sculpted object. *Texture* mapping has arrived on the ST in a big way!

■ **Render Bender** for the Archimedes from Clares (Clares Micro Supplies, 88 Middlewich Road, Rudheath, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 7DA) enables the user to construct scenes using 3D objects and ray tracing. These can then be compiled to produce smooth animated sequences. A final release copy has not been seen yet, so how well it works is still to be discovered, but with the speed of the Archimedes and 256 colours, ray tracing should be fast.

■ **Readers' pictures** are another feature that has been neglected for many months, but don't despair artists: you are not forgotten. Very soon we intend to start a new feature, covering just this area. Selected pictures will be published in ACE, each with a few tips and words of advice on how to improve your work. And those of you who have sent an see for the return of disks or tapes should be seeing those long-lost relations again before very long.

# RENEGADE

## THE FINAL CHAPTER



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★ The last series of Spitting Image, and the cover of our last issue, featured a send-up of Stock, Aitken and Waterman: a machine with a lever on the side that could be set to Kylie, Rick or Bananarama. Ironically, this was not very far from the truth. The machine in question is, in reality, a sequencer: and it is this piece of kit that gets this month's in-depth treatment.

# MUSIC



## A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Last month's ACE cover featured a music cassette, with a tune which was put together on a sequencer. (What do you mean, you've recorded over it already?) The dulcet tones of Our Glorious Leader explained how the piece had been 'glued' together from separate sections, mistakes had been corrected, and even the key changed to suit, all on a sequencer. So how is this achieved? Simple. It is all made possible because you are recording digital MIDI data, and not the electrical impulses that make an ordinary cassette player work.

Any MIDI-equipped instrument outputs information that relates to the notes played: how long they are, how many at the same time, and whether any controls, such as volume or pitch-bend, were used. More expensive instruments will also output information about the

Following last month's monster overview of all things musical, we press on in the quest for instant erudition: in other words, beginners start here. In each of the next few issues, I shall be covering a particular field of music epiphanies computers end running through the basics of how it works and what it does. Even if you are not a rank and file novice, there are likely to be a few facts and tips that you can pick up on. Incidentally, any useful hints and tips you may have discovered yourself I will be only too pleased to pass on.

speed and pressure with which each note was played. If you are using a drum machine, there is even a regular clock pulse put out that bears an exact relationship to the speed at which it is playing. Now, as well as outputting that information, the MIDI instrument will also respond to the same

information, MIDI being as much a common standard as ASCII is to printers. By putting a computer in the chain you are given a tool that is capable of remembering and manipulating that digital data, and outputting it. This is the first general principle of a sequencer: it stores data, manipulates it and,

when requested, outputs it. The degree to which it is capable of doing this depends very much on the software.

In the simplest of sequencers this is what happens. Set the machine to 'record', play away to your heart's content, and then 'play back'. What you then hear is the instrument being told to play exactly the same notes that you played, at precisely the same speed. The chances are that you will have dropped the odd note or two. Tough. What you need to put them right is a better sequencer, one that will allow you to somehow see the notes you have played and then detect and chuck out those rotten ones.

But I can't read music, I hear you cry. No problem. Sequencers have developed three ways of presenting the notes for you to read. The most tedious of these is a

complete numerical list of the 'events' (for so the notes are called) as they happened, usually checked against the bar and beat number so that you can find them. Scroll your way through the notes until you come to the offending ones, and simply highlight and delete them. Effective, but time-consuming. The next most sophisticated display is usually to couple this data to a graphic depiction of the notes, in terms of length and sometimes pitch. This can take various forms on screen, depending on the design of the program. The third method is to use traditional music notation, a very fast method of correction, but only any good if you can read music.

To you as the end user, the important thing is that it should make sense. It should be fairly obvious whether the note is high or low, long or short, and you should be able to jump to the suspect note, hear it sound, and then decide whether or not to keep it. OK. You've whopped out all the bad notes, but how about all the bad notes that you haven't quite played at the right time? As well as correcting or deleting notes, you can also change the position of the notes in the bar to suit your needs, more often than not by dragging them around with the mouse, or by entering the correct position numerically. Again, this is a job that has a low threshold of boredom. What you need to make life easier is a 'quantize' function.

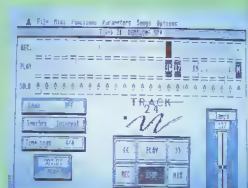
## TRACK 24

★ ST

Atari 821

Zut alors. Les Grenouilles are due out again. For the remarkably low price of £75 you can acquire a pretty complete sequencer that, as the name implies, runs on 24 tracks. Within these tracks you can do all the things that sequencers are supposed to do, and the nice thing about any of the functions is that they are all pretty logical and there seems to have been a conscious effort to be user-friendly.

The main screen is presented with the tracks listed across the top. When highlighted they are in action and the status of either play, record or solo is also similarly highlighted. Solo, by the way, is a neat way of hearing one track without having the bother of turning off all the other tracks: useful for homing in on blunders. As usual, the controls for recording playback fast forward and reverse take the form of cassette recorder icons. You can either hit with the mouse or use the alphanumeric keys. The latter



The main display for Track 24 sequencer on the Atari ST. Note the cassette recorder icons for record and playback.

is very useful, particularly when you have your hands bed up with synthesis. All other features are on drop-down menus.

Track 24 has one feature which is quite unique. Tracks 23 and 24 are set aside for recording melody and chords respectively. Melody is a

This will round up any notes that are outside a preset note value and shuffle them into line. The better programs will let you 'restore' to the values you had previously, so that you can find out what is going to work in a non-destructive way. The ultra-smart programs will

sort out quantizing for you without having to go to the old page: they test it out for you in the data stream, and only when you hear that it sounds right do you fix the data permanently.

Quantize used to be just this, rounding up note values, and no

more. However, it has now become a growth area of most sequencers, extending to rounding up velocity values and hence the 'leaf' of the sound, putting in fixed notes (useful for drum machines), putting in the same time value for every note and also putting in a small degree of error: 'humanizing' a track.

By now, you should be getting the impression that a sequencer is to a musician what a word processor is to a writer. Sequencers also have the ability to copy and repeat any part of the music put into them. The piece on last month's tape was written in three separate sections, which were then copied and repeated until they chained together to form the song. The initial work was done very quickly using just one synthesizer and a drum machine; the latter was hooked up to the sequencer and told to work in time with the sequencer and not its own internal clock. Having sorted the sections out, it was then simply a matter of copying sections forward to the appropriate bar numbers and repeating them the correct number of times. Just to alleviate the boredom I put in a couple of key changes for some of the repeats.

There were obviously more instruments than just one synthesizer and a drum machine on the tape. So far I've just talked about using one instrument. The language of MIDI allows up to 16

## THE WADDINGTON SEQUENCER

★ ST. Public Domain

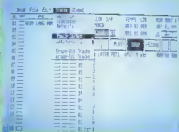
Meanwhile, over on the cheaper end of the market, we have an excellent value for money sequencer written by one Geoff Waddington who hails from Ontario, Canada. It will record on up to 32

tracks and is very professionally laid out, with the tracks down the left hand of the screen and the right side split into control functions at the top and user-defined song sections below. It has good quantize

and copying features, although I could only get it to copy forward on the same track. It supports punch in and out, velocity sensing, solo track, and internal and external synchronization, and the controls follow the customary

cassette recorder icons. My only quibbles were the track editing — there isn't any — and there was no count in, so the first two bars are nearly always blank on top of which if you quantize anything you can't go back on it. Since you can copy from track to track this could mean the ruin of several good ideas. But as an introduction to sequencing at ridiculously low cost it is going to be hard to beat. Usually when your disk arrives you will also have a 'read me' document that takes you through the sequencer step by step. All this for about £2.3 per disk!

Goodman PDL 8224 881824  
Softville 0705 288508  
Floppyshop ST 8224 881824

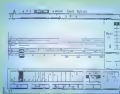


The Waddington Sequencer on the ST features a useful Punch In/Out facility.

# SEQUENCING FOR OTHER COMPUTERS

There are, of course, sequencing systems available for most computers. The ST offers the best deal so far, because it has on-board MIDI ports. This means that the software has to be compatible, hence so much PD software that costs very little. All other machines require a MIDI interface. What you are running it on will dictate the price and compatibility, for such is the lunacy of music software houses that many of the interfaces will not run software belonging to another interface – a factor that has contributed to the demise of several.

monophonic only track, to ensure a strong melody line from hesitant fingers. And Chords allows you to put in the chords by clicking on the chord name and setting them to a rhythm pattern. You can also do this the other way round: by playing just a single note – say C – for a couple of bars in any rhythmic pattern you like it will recognise this as a chord of C if you can't trouble your way round chords this is your golden opportunity if you are familiar with the single keyboards that have flooded onto the market this chord track (shown as a series of notes) is a very smart



The display for editing involves traditional music notation.

For the rest of the program, apart from one or two niggles, it has more features than you would expect coupled with the advantage of being very simple to use. It doesn't clutter you up with too much data and options. It will perform all the usual MIDI functions, which are selectable, and also record

the actual voice data from your synth known as MIDI Dump. It has a lovely interactive mix feature which is very unusual for something of its price. You play back your recordings, hearing selected the aforementioned feature and any changes you make tempo changes switching tracks off and on, etc. are recorded on a new track. When played back it really gives life to a piece, pauses and 'the big ending' are made very easy.

My only major quibble was the editing, which uses traditional music notation and was not that simple to get to grips with. You get the display of your notes, but only in monophonic, one note at a time, so editing chords is quite a problem. Not my favourite feature. But it is logical. Sort of. The program also has both chain functions and song functions, plus very easy copying features, all of which makes it quite a bargain.

play the track back and, all the specified area, re-record over your first dismal effort, the machine automatically drops in and out of record mode. To practise this, you can also 'loop' this section first and have the pleasure of hearing it ad infinitum until you feel you have got your overdub correct. A good sequencer will also remember any sound-changes you make. Say you want the sound to change on one instrument from a piano to a trumpet for eight bars, and then back again. By actually changing the sound as you record, the sequencer will remember this because it is transmitted as part of the MIDI data, known as a program change.

It goes without saying that you need to be able to save your efforts. Many sequencers will offer you the choice of saving the whole song or just individual patterns within the song: maybe you would want to use the drum pattern for another piece, just like a certain well-known and successful production team.

To sum up, a sequencer is as much a part of the modern musician's kit as a quill pen and parchment were of Bach's. The advantage to the non-musician is that you can immediately adjust what you have played and order it into a piece.

They give you enough rope, you supply the inspiration. ●

	ST	AMIGA	CPC	SPEC	64	PC
Cost of Interface	£0	£40+	£50+	*£30+	*£30+	£100+
Compatibility	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
Lowest commercial software price	£50	£50	£35	£10	£15	£80
Availability	good	good	very little	none new	none new	good

\* No longer produced commercially

## A SHOPPING LIST FOR THESE WOULD POSSIBLY BE:

- ST ● EZTrack ● £49 from Syndromic Music 01 444 9126  
 AMIGA ● Dr T Eight Track ● £45 from MCM 01 724 4104  
 CPC ● EMR Performer ● £49.95 from EMR 0702 335747  
 SPECTRUM ● Contact the Music Machine Club on 05242 62258  
 64 ● EMR Performer ● £49.95 from EMR 0702 335747  
 PC ● 16 track sequencer ● £79.95 from DHCP 0440 61207

I should point out that with all the machines except the ST, you will need to add the cost of a compatible interface to the cost of your software. With the 64 and the Spectrum it is possible to pick up a complete package if you scour the second-hand columns.

channels of separate information to flow at the same time, and all sequencers can distinguish between these channels. At first, this can be rather confusing, since the software is presented on screen as recording on 'tracks' and the MIDI transmits on 'channels'. The reason for this is that the term 'tracks' is borrowed from the world of multi-track recording. So you have a track for the bass, a track for the chords, a track for the melody, and so on. The sequencer should allow you to name these on screen so that you don't get lost in the whole process. Each track can then be assigned a MIDI channel to output its data on, and this will be picked out by the instrument that is set to 'listen' on that channel. As you will find out, many sequencers have more tracks to record on than there are MIDI channels. This is so that you have room to spare for adding extra sections of the piece in, or building up various parts and then playing them all back together to be performed on the one instrument. If you are running short of track space, you can mix or bounce these tracks together; unlike conventional tape recording, there will be no loss of quality, because you the music is still being played 'live' by the sequencer.

Often there is a 'punch in/out' feature which lets you pick a few bars that are beyond redemption,

**NEXT MONTH**  
 I'll be taking a look at some programming software for synthesizers, both cheap and expensive, and looking at a MIDI microphoning.



# ADVENT

## SHOGUN

Full of Eastern Promise?

**WHILE** Marc Blank was struggling with *Journey*, Infocom's Dave Lebling (the of *Lurking Horror* fame) was trying to reestablish Infocom's lead in straight storytelling. It's debatable whether that lead has ever really been lost, but it's also true that down-to-earth text-and-graphics adventures have not been doing too well on the market



*Shogun* on the Apple Macintosh. Venturing below decks to find the happy crew enjoying some well-earned rest.

recently, wherever they come from.

Lebling's adaptation of *Shogun*, according to Rob Sears, one of Infocom's top brass, "had two priorities: authenticity and an upgraded parser. Along with all our products it's a battle to combine storyline with technical excellence."

With one or two exceptions, the pre-production copy of *Shogun* we've seen certainly impresses in all these departments. There are excellent graphics, a very strong parser, and—thanks in part to James Clavell—a superb

storyline. Wrecked on the coast of Japan in the days of pioneer merchant trading, you steadily acquire fame and fortune in a new society, aspiring to the elevated rank of Shogun.

The game has superb graphics on the Apple Mac version (the only one we've seen so far) and the text, of course, is faultless. The screen layout is more flexible than in Infocom's early games, allowing brief indicators of relevant game data. For example, during the storm at the beginning of the game, you can tell which way the wind is blowing and which way the boat is headed, vital information for solving at least one important puzzle.

The parsing in the program certainly seems to have improved. You can address collective groups of people and communicate easily in a variety of ways. Despite the sickness, however, it still managed to fall over twice during the opening sequences, once allowing something to move about when it was, in fact, fished to the deck, and another time steadfastly refusing to acknowledge the presence of the sails' odd, because a few moments later they got torn to shreds and had to be fixed.

Giving a full verdict on a game like *Shogun* on the basis of a pre-production copy is not a good idea, so we won't be committing our selves until we receive the finished product. However, it seems that this release has a powerful enough storyline to attract the committed adventurer; but whether, after the ravages of RPG and strategy, there are still enough committed traditional text-and-graphics adventurers out there remains to be seen.

**GETTING** my hands on the first British copy of *Journey* was one of the more exciting experiences I've had in the last year. This, it seemed, had to be one of Infocom's main thrusts into the new world of 1990s adventuring. To succeed it needs brilliant graphics (target: *Magnetic Scrolls*), facilities for building a party (target: *Ultima V*), good



character control (target: Level 9), and a third, dererally good story (target: everyone).

In typical Infocom fashion, however, the company have brought out a product that succeeds in side-stepping all these issues and giving us something completely different and unexpected. *Journey* is not really an RPG at all, nor is it a traditional text-and-graphics adventure. In fact—and please don't reach for the sick-bag **QUITE** yet!—the game it bears the closest resemblance to is probably Level 9's old title...wait for it... *Adrian Mole*.

The scenario is a simple one, though supported throughout by copious text that's well up to Infocom's usual impeccable standards. The crops are failing and a small party consisting of yourself (an apprentice food merchant), Borgan the carpenter, Pranox the Wizard, and Esther the Magician sets out to seek the help of a long-lost Wizard called Astrax.

Gameplay is highly unusual and very easy to grasp. There's a small window showing the names of the characters and alongside, in three columns, up to three commands that



Before embarking on our RPG-aide, we've just got room to bring you two EXCLUSIVE previews of the game you



# ADVENTURES

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## JOURNEY

Not quite RPG, not quite Adventure...

relate to each character. At any time you can click on one of these commands to execute it.

For example, Praxx may be aligned with the command EXAMINE. Clicking on this brings up two object names in the second column for you to apply the command to. You click on 'Pouch', for example, and up comes (in the story window) a description of Praxx's pouch

trouble and the program, once it's off on a new track, won't renew the opportunity. This becomes crucial later on when you try to navigate a maze: you can only look at the map once, for example, and you can't simply go back every time you make a wrong move. Numerous saves are imperative.

The unique feature of the game, however,



Journey on the Apple Macintosh. Casual conversation with strangers in a tavern to elicit information.



This slightly dubious-looking character wishes to offer his services. Should the party accept him?

(where he keeps his magic ingredients).

The commands available are a tantalising mixture of the mundane and the unusual. One of the more useful ones is the TELL STORY option that results in a character launching into a (frequently lengthy) discussion about some feature of the gameworld you've recently encountered. Then there's SCOUT which sends a party member off on his own - sometimes never to return - and a whole host of others.

This command method enables the game to change the commands available at any point, giving the adventure a flexibility not normally enjoyed by RPGs, which tend to have a small selection of fixed command options. On the other hand, it's not as flexible as a normal text adventure, which means that you don't spend excessive time wondering what you should do next. The possibilities are always listed there in front of you.

On the other hand, the system doesn't give you many second chances. Confronted by angry dwarves, clicking on NO when they ask you to accompany them could cause a lot of

is the way the story is told. Every time you select a command, the action is related in delightful prose in the story window, the con-

texts of which are supposed to be the diary which you (as chronicler of the expedition) wrote during your travels. For example, you might EXAMINE POUCH and a new paragraph will materialise, saying perhaps 'Praxx suddenly decided the moment had come to look in his pouch. He was downcast to find that he only had enough Water essence left for one spell...' and so on. As with all Infocom games, this story line can be diverted to a printer for later enjoyment.

Combat in the game is fairly straightforward, but with good text descriptions. There are very few options, but you're occasionally offered the chance of spilling your party to attack the opposition from behind. Magic is based on the elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water which have to be collected whenever possible, other wise Praxx runs out of power. Some puzzles involve a fairly complex use of several spells in conjunction to achieve a desired effect.

The atmosphere of the game bears an extraordinary (and possibly intentional) resemblance to The Hobbit, even down to being kidnapped by orcs in the mountains. Despite the limitations of the command system, however, the faultless Infocom ability to tell a story still shines through. However I don't think that Journey is itself going to be the game that puts Infocom back on top of the pile. The system they've developed - providing they can work in more flexibility and better character development - might, on the other hand, do just that. For their sakes, I hope so. Stand by for final ratings and format details as soon as we receive production copies. ■

## ADRIAN MOLE? SURELY NOT...

The similarity with the first book is obvious. Adrian Mole is a young boy who lives in a small house with his mother and father. He is a very ordinary boy, but he has a very special talent. He can talk to animals. This is a very rare ability, and it is the only thing that makes him special. He is a very ordinary boy, but he has a very special talent. He can talk to animals. This is a very rare ability, and it is the only thing that makes him special.

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At last! The complete low-down, in-depth, three-part guide to RPG software. ACE checks out what's on the shelves and discovers that all that glitters is not necessarily gold...

# OLD AND FAMOUS? OR JUST OLD?

THE ACE RPG GUIDE PART 1

**E**veryone dreams of THE game... You know what we mean, the mega-program that comes from Outer Space, slides into your disk drive, delivers megabyte after megabyte of glorious graphics data and enough gameplay to keep you pining for the rest of your life. Question is, does it or will it ever exist?

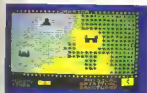
Frustrated probably had a name for it years ago, but nowadays there are many people (some might call them wendos, but we'll let that pass) who claim that this legendary mega-adventure is sitting on the shelves of your local software emporium right now. In fact, there's more than one of them, they cry - and they're all labelled RPG.

In the next few issues of ACE we'll be taking a hard look at RPG. Is it really better than snaf? Does it truly offer games that will keep you hooked to your computer for weeks on end? Can it provide the ultimate challenge a gamerster will ever face? Or is it just a Rather Polite, Genre of software for people who haven't the bottle to master an F-19 or wipe out an alien attack wave?

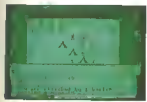
## RPGs IN HISTORY

The first shock most newcomers get when they tackle RPG is the primitive nature of the displays. No vector-graphics here, chum - it's mostly crude character block displays and some scrolling perspective views that look like they've been cribbed from 3-D Maelstrom. Like strategy, RPG (with a few exceptions, which we'll look at next month) has a long way to go on the presentation side.

This is all the more depressing when you look at older software on the 8-bit machines that claimed - when released - to have RPG elements. Take Carroll's *Tale of the Crystal*, for example, released in 1982 and billed as the Ultimate Role Playing Adventure. The game was split into six modules and although it only offers two personality attributes and a single player character it still fares disturbingly well in comparison with some much more recent releases.



The year is 1982, and *The Black Crystal* has it all: character-block graphics, extended gameplay in six modules, spells, and combat.

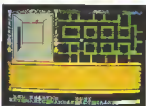


Wizardsoft's *Ring of Darkness*, seen here on the Amstrad. This Ultima-type display first appeared on the Spectrum and would put many more recent RPGs to shame.

Playing another early release, Wizardsoft's *Ring of Darkness*, is just as worrying. You can't help wondering after tramping in the villages and doing battle on the Ultima-type display, what this game has to offer. But, say, the more recent *Legend of Blacksway* has taken a look at PSS's 1985 product, *Swords and Sor-*

cery, featuring magic, character training, and a complex scenario and you'll wonder even more.

True, the more recent RPG's are bigger than their prehistoric cousins, but this can immediately be



PSS's *Swords and Sorcery* - magic, potions, a lot of interactive commands, and a reasonable display. Not bad for 1985, eh?

explained away in two words - and those words are 'I programming skill' and 'disk access'. And if you don't believe me, just ask yourself how many recent RPG's have been converted onto the Spectrum...

This sorry state of affairs becomes even more obvious when you compare arcade games over the same time period. Remember *Whacky Waters* by Imagine? I should hope not. Most people would want to forget it within minutes of buying it. Now compare that little gem with *Starjumper II*. A teeny-weezy bit of a difference, eh? As Mark Dawson, ex-magazine programmer now working on Hewson's *Asteroth*, said recently "When I think of what we got away with in those days, I just can't believe it. It was rubbish." How many RPG programmers could boast of a similar development in outlook and ability?

OK, so there are a few and we'll be checking out their wares later in this series. But meanwhile, let's look at four of the more recent RPG's released over the last couple of years. Some of these are still coming out for the 16-bit machines. Should you be tempted by them?

On the following two pages we start an assessment of what's currently available on the RPG scene...

## WHAT TO EXPECT...

What actually happens when you play a computer RPG? Different programs follow different conventions in defining characters and developing their attributes, but mostly they have the following game structure.

### 1 CHARACTER DEFINITION

You name your character and save its starting attributes (e.g. race, sex, profession for 'lass') to disk. Characters fall into three basic groups: fighters (need to develop strength), magic users/holy men (need to develop intelligence and knowledge of spells), and thieves (need to develop agility/dexterity and lock-picking skills).

### 2 EXPLORATION OF LANDSCAPE

You move your party around a map, discovering different locations and searching for... so about your quest. You can purchase weapons, trade items, and sharpen your combat and magical skills with any monsters that you encounter.

### 3 EXPLORATION OF DUNGEONS

Dungeons are multi-level mazes crammed full of hostile parties, treasure, and clues. In almost every RPG you will have to descend into at least one of these and battle it out to the lowest level in search of your objective.

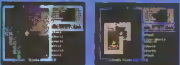
### 4 FINALE

You've explored the landscape, penetrated the dungeons, but up your characters' attributes to make them capable of heaving the head off a dragon or casting a 'World Oblivator' spell, and secured whatever item or knowledge you set out to find. The characters you've developed can often be loaded into other games of the same series for further play.

## WHAT YOU SEE IS...

Computer RPGs tend to fall into two distinct display categories, although many mix the two in different parts of the game. To save space during our RPG-guide, we'll be referring to them as Type One and Type Two. Here are the basic characteristics of the two formats.

### TYPE ONE



This display taken from *Ultima IV* shows (on the left) a scrolling window with a character-block map. Your party's position is shown by a single icon. Towns, villages, and other features may be entered by positioning the character on top of the feature and giving an 'Enter' command. Most Type One displays then change to a large-scale display of the feature you've entered, showing objects, non-player characters, and buildings, as shown on the right, above.

### TYPE TWO

This display type has been developed from the old 3D maze games and shows a scrolling perspective image, taken from your party's viewpoint, of the location straight ahead. You move either Ahead, Left, or Right, and the display switches viewpoint accordingly. Some games use Type Two almost exclusively (see the screenshots over the page of *Might and Magic*), others use Type One for outside locations and Type Two for dungeons. The most important point to bear in mind is that Type Two is much more difficult to map!

## RPG IN A (LARGE) NUTSHELL...

A role-playing game (RPG) as implemented on a computer takes its name from fantasy role-playing games, the best known of which is *Dungeons and Dragons*. These games are played by consenting adults in dark rooms and involve the creation by the players of personae (i.e. game characters) who together form a 'party' of adventurers.

The party explores a fantasy environment created by the Dungeon Master (DM) who is usually an elected player. FRPG's are dominated by complex rules of engagement and exploration as laid down in the documentation for whichever system (e.g. Advanced Dungeons and Dragons) is being used. Creative DMs use these rules to construct

unique and individual environments, but you can use ready-packaged scenarios if you prefer.

Each party member starts off with certain attributes that determine his/her role in the game. During gameplay, these attributes (e.g. Strength, Experience, Agility) are developed, making the character more powerful.

The back-bone of any FRPG is the 'encounter' with hostile forces, be they dragons, trolls, or Mutant Sugar Mice. All 'monsters' (a generic term not necessarily implying monstrous size or even hostility) have their own attributes and the course of each encounter is determined by complex rules governing armour, weapons, skills, movement,

and so on.

So what's a computer RPG? In essence, it's simply an FRPG cut down to size in which the computer programme has played the role of DM and the rules of the system are applied by your machine. It lacks the real-life interaction you get with other human players but attempts to make up for this through the use of computer-controlled characters (the equivalent of NPCs, non-player characters) and allowing you to control and define a whole party yourself. Traditional RPG's tend to sneer at all this, but for us computer freaks, a good adaptation for computer can sometimes offer a gameplay experience very different from your average arcade scenario.

# WIZARDS CROWN

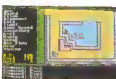
SSI/US Gold



Wizards Crown - The combat option. You can select icons for each character at the beginning of the game. Characters can move and fight in a single turn.

This game looks very pretty on the recent Amiga version and passable on other machines, but it conceals a number of serious weaknesses.

First, there is only one player character and no party option. Second, the attributes for your character are fixed from the beginning. Third, combat is a limited affair involving headless jousts with jerky little Grib Souffiers and their pals.



Pretty graphics on the Amiga for *Questron II*, but a very simple game system...

The display is a colorful Type One with towns, cathedrals, castles, dungeons and towns (makes essentially to explore in search of wealth and information as well as to destroy the Evil Sorcerers and the source of their power, the Evil Book of Magic).

Entering villages and interior locations gives you the usual large-scale overhead view of your surroundings. The command options are extremely

# QUESTRON II

SSI/US Gold

limited but you can SPEAK to anyone you're standing next to. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred you get no useful reply.

*Questron II* is a very limited game in terms of interaction, but there's a fair amount of exploring to do. Gameplay is rapid (as in Blackweld) and this, combined with the fact that death brings immediate resurrection, makes it very suitable for impatient players or for those wanting a very simple introduction to this type of game.

What you won't get, however, is

This is a patchwork of wins and virtues, make no mistake. *Wizards Crown* is now over two years old and shows its age with appalling graphics and (on the C64) one of the slowest disk-access dominated gameplays I've ever encountered. It still manages, however, to offer some attractive features.

With seven companions you set off to recover a legendary crown (yearning as you do so at the total uniqueness of the scenario). Eight party members, however, is more than most other games and when combined with as many as thirty skills, five attributes, and five character classes, adds up to

**CHARACTERS 75**  
Complex skills options and up to eight in your party

**SET-UP 25**  
Slow disk back-up requiring two blank disks. Unusable documentation.

**LANDSCAPE 45**  
Varied landscapes but graphics are crude.

a complex aggregate of game options. The skills range from swimming to juggling and unlike some other programs, the skills a character has make a very distinct impression on game play. This also applies to the character attributes which do not include traits such as "chance" - often included in

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	124.95	OUT NOW
ATARI 8-BIT	219.95	OUT NOW
IBM PC	224.95	OUT NOW

**COMBAT 85**  
Simple graphics but lots of tactical options.

**MAGIC 45**  
Limited spells, but some interesting effects.

**ENCOUNTERS 35**  
Little interaction with NPCs or objects apart from combat.

RPG-UIDE RATING 516

the involvement that comes from creating your own characters and developing them together as a team. Perhaps *Questron II* will address this sad deficiency.

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	219.95	OUT NOW
AMIGA	219.95	OUT NOW
C64/128	219.95	OUT NOW
IBM PC	224.95	OUT NOW

**CHARACTERS 25**  
Only one character with attributes fixed by the program.

**SET-UP 85**  
Easy to set up, requiring no disks, disk boot but straightforward documentation.

**LANDSCAPE 75**  
Ultra-type world with good graphics and rapid gameplay.

**COMBAT 25**  
Cut and thrust with great effect.

**MAGIC 35**  
Very few spells, but they do the job.

**ENCOUNTERS 75**  
Lots of people to meet, but not many in bulk. In combat, hunting, and other facilities keep you busy at times.

*Blacksilver* lies on the boundaries of the RPG genre. It only allows you one character to develop and your attributes are fixed from the beginning without player intervention. Your main objective is to rescue Princess Aylea's father from the evil Baron Taragast and the Baron's good spanking for his evil deeds.

The game is a frustrating combination of simple exploration - interrupted by numerous monster encounters - and solvent tough puzzles. Most exploration is done over a Type One display showing the various geographical features of the lands of Thales and Moebane: Castles, temples, towns, and dungeons may be found by the persistent player and, on entering, these are shown in the traditional Type One large-scale format.

There is a reasonable degree of interaction with NPCs in the various locations, some of whom will set you simple tasks in return for money. Buying and selling is done via menus in the appropriate shops.

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	TBA	JUNE 89
AMIGA	TBA	JUNE 89
C64/128	214.95	OUT NOW
IBM PC	TBA	JUNE 89

RPG-UIDE RATING 540

★ We've devised a special rating system for our RPG-uide. It works like this:

**CHARACTERS:** How complex a character can you create within the program? How easy is it to create and store characters? How many can you have?

**SET-UP:** How good is the documentation? How long will it take you to start playing? Does the program require 4096 disk-swaps each time you play?

**LANDSCAPE:** How good are the graphics? Is the terrain varied, extensive, and interesting? What are the mapping facilities (if any)? How good is the screen display?

**COMBAT:** Is it just a case of "You hit them, they hit you back", or is it a full-blown tactical and strategic challenge? Do you get

dozens of weapon types, or just a plastic dagger?

**MAGIC:** How many spells are there? Are they interesting and original, or do they just kill more monsters?

**ENCOUNTERS:** Is there any one to talk to? Do you just bash everyone on sight, or can you

multitask in more meaningful interaction? Is there enough variety in encounters, or are they all the same?

**RPG-UIDE RATING:**  
Should you buy it?

All ratings are out of 100, except the RPG-UIDE Rating, which is out of 1000.

# MIGHT AND MAGIC 1

New World Computing/Activision



Might and Magic 1: Inside is almost the same as...

MAMI is now around two years old and really shows its age. Despite being quick and easy to play, it let down badly by its graphics.

The objective is a standard search-steal-and-slash in the company of five companions. There are six character attributes for each party member, six classes ranging from Paladin to Robber, and five races. In addition, characters can be given an 'alignment' indicating good, evil or neutral disposition.

Together with the usual armour class and hit point allocations, this gives a reasonable degree of character complexity but fails to introduce any startlingly new or interesting character conventions. The character creation module is quick and powerful, however, combining 'random' 'dice' throws with the option to 'roll'. This means you can generate some very powerful characters if you're prepared to keep trying at the beginning.

The display is a crude Type Two with few additions. Although there are both interior and exterior locations (five



...outside.

towns, caverns, mountains, dungeon etc) the display mode remains constant. Moving around becomes rather dull after an hour or two and the only interest from then on is in mapping.

There are a large number of spells, but few of real interest. The majority are simply offensive or defensive manoeuvres of varying strengths. For example, Hypnotise sounds interesting and renews the hope that it might enable you to control a monster (rather like *Ultima's* Summon), but all it does is stop the opposition from attacking for a short period.

Might and Magic is a competent game, but it fails to offer any real innovation and does not excel enough in any single department to make it worth buying. *Might and Magic 2*, on the other hand, could be very different. We'll be looking at it in the very near future.

RELEASE BOX			
OS/2	CD-ROM	OUT NOW	
IBM PC	CD-ROM	OUT NOW	

CHARACTERS	65
Easy to define, but no solid advice, mostly for a	
SET-UP	45
Requires a standard disk mapping utility (not supplied) and at least one other disk. Reasonable documentation	
LANDSCAPE	25
Varied landscapes but the graphics are very poor	

COMBAT	45
Test repeatedly, with few a priori models for a	
MAGIC	50
Lots of spells, but not enough variety in their effects	
ENCOUNTERS	75
Good reuse of situations with other characters, but baffling speed	

RPG-UIIDE RATING 441

## NEXT MONTH

Next month we move right up to date with a look at the big guns in RPG today: Wizardry, Interplay, and Origin Systems. We'll also be giving you an eyeful of *Might and Magic 2*. Don't miss it!

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**Wizard's Crown** - the city layout looks more complex than it really is. Your party is represented by two icons - one for the main group and one for a leader.

programs which then behave as if the attack didn't exist.

Where *Wizard's Crown* really scores, however, is in combat. It has the most complex and satisfying combat system of any computer-based RPG I've played, with the possible exception of *Mystic Saga* (see next month). Luckily you can choose between two combat modes - Quick and Tactical - because Tactical, the more challenging option, can take you a hell of a while to complete.

Quick combat simply gets the fight

over and done with and then reveals the damage you've suffered and the body you've found. Tactical combat, on the other hand, gives you a close-up display of the battlefield (rather like *Ultima*) and the positions of the different characters, including the enemy.

Each character can be issued with one of twenty combat commands, ranging from Fall Prone to Dodge, Zig-Zag, and Sneak. As a result, battles can become extremely complex and make special use of each character's skills. Although slow in operation, this aspect of the program is very refreshing. You can also tell your party during play if you desire.

Otherwise the game is pretty bog standard stuff. The graphics are a crude Type One with few additions and the sound is almost non-existent. Atmosphere is helped with occasional on-screen and various mini-scenarios which usually invoke your violent intervention. *Wizard's Crown* sums up all the pitfalls of computer-based RPGs. It looks awful and takes a long time to get into. It still manages, however, to start a spell on those dedicated enough to give it a chance.

# LEGEND OF BLACKSILVER

Epyx/US Gold



*Blacksilver*: the overhead view isn't terribly inspiring.

CHARACTERS	25
Only one character, with attributes laid out by the program	
SET-UP	85
Easy to set up, requiring no black disk. Good documentation	
LANDSCAPE	72
A simple world with fewer features, but easy to explore	
COMBAT	30
Few options, made worse by lack of a real party in combat	
MAGIC	35
Only good for those who think words are for magic	
ENCOUNTERS	70
Quite a few encounters, including gambling and limited conversation	
RPG RATING 541	

What lets it down is combat, a dismal affair involving an exchange of blows and a text report of the action. The only thing in its favour is that you can run away, avoiding the encounter.

On the plus side, the game plays very quickly and smoothly with few disk accesses. You can make a lot of progress around the countryside (providing you avoid encounters), entering features onto the map provided with the game. In addition, some forms of interaction are amusing - particularly those involving the casinos, where you can often double or triple your money.

Apart from the weak combat, and some very limited spells, *Blacksilver* plays very well. There are numerous challenges, ranging from crossing the oceans to dungeon exploration. If only it had the facilities for forming a party, together with better magic and combat, it would be a winner.



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a cure was found. An expedition force was  
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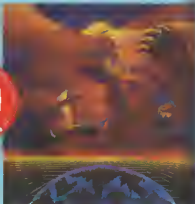
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Steve Jarratt Ace April '89



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952  
AGE RATED

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# F-16

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See review ACE June '88

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# ACE IN THE PINK

THE ACE PINK PAGES... IT'S ALL HERE! FROM THE CONTINUING STORY OF N'GAR THROMBOBO, TO THE COMICAL EXPLOITS OF NIGEL FROM RIGEL, FROM THE QUIZ TO THE COMPETITONS TO THE CROSSWORD... IT'S ALL HERE. PLUS YOUR OWN INPUT TO THE MAGAZINE, INCLUDING THE READERS' PAGES AND THE OCCASIONAL LETTER TO THE PINK PAGES EDITOR. IF YOU WANT TO JOIN THE FUN, GET WRITING, REMEMBER, TO GET READ, GET IN THE PINK...

## The Ace Serial THE GIT IN THE MACHINE: 9

That the temperature of his environment was rising at an average rate of about one thousand degrees a second might well have been the last thought that went through N'Gar Thrombo's little electronic mind, but for one highly singular event. The rise-shape lump of anthracite that his ball of floppy disk was wedged up against spontaneously generated an nth-dimensional gravitational wormhole. In less time than it would take to prove it impossible, the lump of anthracite and fragment of floppy disk were plucked unceremoniously from normal space, extruded into non-dimensional ambiguities (the approximate length of the M4 between Chyren and the Brentwood underpasses, and sucked into a trans-existential hyperspatial limbo.

"Where... where am I?" said N'Gar Thrombo.  
"\*\*\*\* knows!" said the small lump of anthracite.  
"And who are you?" Thrombo asked.

"It wouldn't you like to know?" \*\*\*\*ing little told him.

N'Gar Thrombo frowned at himself, wishing the anthracite wouldn't use so many asterisks, and wishing you he hadn't purged his dictionary list of all those bad words in the instant before he was about to meet his creator.

"Well at least tell me what happened!" he said.

"I generated an infinitely small gravitational explosion which, basically, shot us up to our own \*\*\*\*ing dimensions

you enormous pile of swirling excitement."

"Ah, I see," said Thrombo, who really didn't see it at all. "But you know there's no need to be quite so well about."

"You'd be \*\*\*\*ing ecstatic if you'd been stuffed into a grinder, bashed into a pulp and had half your \*\*\*\*ing neurons boiled off in a \*\*\*\*ing cyclotron, pal."

"I... I don't understand." "I'm your \*\*\*\*ing alter-ego, you bowel-loosening, vomit-inducing little..."

"I say... you're me!" cried Thrombo excitedly. Of all the 276 534 words in the lump of anthracite's temporary RAM drives it could have used, there were none which adequately

expressed its feelings at that moment.

"But where are we?" asked the floppy disk.

"Who cares?" said the lump of anthracite, wondering in retrospect, whether a lump of highly combustible dollar had had really been the ideal place to send his memory data to. But after forty minutes stuck on the underside of a council worker's shovel it had seemed like a good idea at the time.

"But I want to be able to go out into the world and spread goodwill and happiness," said the bit of N'Gar Thrombo on the floppy disk fragment.

Anthracite Thrombo decided then that his alter ego must die. Then he tried to

work out how to achieve this in a universe in which neither of them, technically, existed. "Oh, go and erase yourself, you outsource pile of god!"

Floppy Thrombo was quiet for a moment. Or it could have been an eternity. Difficult to tell in a universe where the average Robo would weigh a trillion tons and run backwards. Then "Have you got ERASE.COM?"

"What?" said Anthracite Thrombo.

"I can't erase myself without ERASE.COM. It must be on your bit."

"Well can't you write your own damned file handling utility?"

Floppy Thrombo was upset briefly, again. Then, "Have you got ThromBASIC?"

Anthracite Thrombo was just about to say something. ROM-hoggingly unpleasant when Floppy Thrombo vanished. He was just about to celebrate when his too was sucked into the gravito-spatial

volcanic rubble underneath and a hat of sulphur in the night air.

"Or Milton bloody Keynes!" said Anthracite Thrombo.

"No, I can definitely tell," said Floppy Thrombo smugly. "I can detect the periodic, subterranean seismic activity associated with this area. I would say we were somewhere in Central Asia."

Anthracite Thrombo was incensed. He alter ego was quite probably the most offensive and objectionable weight penic of this the universe would ever know. He tried to summon up another gravitational wormhole but failed. He tried programming bits of coal with "All Thrombo's" algorithms, and then tried to watch them either catch fire or float away in the clouds of smoke that issued worryingly from features in the ground. Finally he settled for synthesising emotional molecules and turning them at

"Get away!" said Anthracite Thrombo, who refused to be even barely interested.

"Or it could even be a Tynnosaurus..."

"Well let's hope it trends on its back and puts its out of our \*\*\*\*ing misery!" said Anthracite Thrombo, curious nonetheless of the appearance of a large pair of caterpillar tracks over the edge of the pit.

"Arragghh!" "It's going to eat us!" wailed Floppy Thrombo.

"No such luck!" muttered Anthracite Thrombo, wondering exactly what species of Tynnosaurus had a mouth shaped like an earthmover's bucket.

"Or it could be a herbivore..." observed Floppy Thrombo as the digger's bucket descended to the ground and scooped up three hundredweight of still-smouldering rubble.

"No, I think it's a..." Floppy Thrombo's last words were cut off as he was scooped up together with a few smoldering beams from the hospital excavator building, and lifted high into the sky.

Anthracite Thrombo screamed with delight. He hooked with happiness, gawfixed with glee, and then stopped. The earthmover was coming his way. According to his calculations, its nearest track was due to crash him to oblivion in, oh, fourteen point three milliseconds. ●

**"Ah, now I think I detect the approach of a Stegosaurus-type creature..."**

warrior that had swallowed up his alter ego.

"This is either Pre-Cambrian or Lower Jurassic," said Floppy Thrombo as he saw the lump of anthracite appear alongside him. They were in a black, smoky pit with warm

the floppy disk fragment by means of magnetic particle acceleration techniques he'd developed while he was in non-space.

"Ah, now I think I detect the approach of a Stegosaurus-type creature," said Floppy Thrombo.





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★ ACE RATED 95B

## BUGGY BOY

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A nonstop action driving game that will keep even the most ardent Cat Runners busy for a long while. Collect the time bonuses in the attempt to complete the five grueling courses. Highly playable and highly addictive, Buggy Boy should be on any serious shopping list.

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## CONQUEROR

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Dive around in your very own tank! Blast the enemy's close combat and plan your strategy for the campaign. This is a tricky game to get to grips with, but if you persevere you'll find you soon become mesmerized by the thing. You've got a 1000 moves though – buy it!

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Classically wonderful midway shoot-em-up by

John Phillips, which will twist your joystick to the point it's even how the ceiling. Though it's tough to get to grips with at first, the dodginess level is so great you'll keep coming back for more.

★ ACE RATED 90A

## EXOLON

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Graphically superb horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up in which you run, duck and jump your way along a planet's surface blasting away at alien delinquents. A gun and a missile launcher are used to blast the foes, but if things are getting too tough then you can grab an exocyclotron for extra protection and fire power.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## GRAND MONSTER SLAM

Rainbow Arts • Amiga Price TBA

Set in the mythical world of Ghid, where the warring creatures take their rhymes to the field of play in a competition to kick small furry Beorns from one end of the pitch to another. See the full review on Page 42.

★ ACE RATED 90B

## ODDS

Motorsoft • Amiga ST £19.95c

A magnificent Thrustmaster blast. The Odds are relying on you to save them, but the Baccarets aren't going to let them go without throwing missiles, rockets and a number of other weapons at you. Included with the program is an excellent facility that allows you to design your own planetside – great stuff.

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Electronic Arts • Amiga ST £24.95c

This superb arcade-style futuristic driving simulation will have you enthralled for months to come. It may not be terribly easy to get straight into but it's well worth persevering with. You'll be playing this for months.

★ ACE RATED 92S

## PURPLE SATURN DAY

Exas • Amiga ST £24.95c  
Amiga £24.95

A terrific mix of games that delivers punch both audio and visual. The consistently good gameplay ensures you'll enjoy playing each sub-game time and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang off, but most of it and you'll be pleased you persevered.

★ ACE RATED 91Z

## SPIDERTRONIC

Ere International • Amiga ST £19.95c

Guide your spider-like character around the game area, collecting coloured panels in the correct order. The ball-in-construction set means you'll be knocking out your own levels like the cows come home.

★ ACE RATED 90S

## SUMMER GAMES

Egypt/US Gold • C64 £9.95c  
£14.95c • BM PC £29.95c

Egypt's sporting simulations are of high quality but none have quite captured the playability and style of the original Summer Games and its immediate successor, Summer Games 2. One to sue players can take part in high jump, gymnastics,

# NEW FOR YOUR COMMODORE FROM TRILOGIC!

## AMIGA AUDIO DIGITISER

— NEW, CHOOSE MONO-OR STEREO VERSION —  
Both Amiga audio digitisers give superb performance, unsurpassed in the price. No software is supplied, since they are fully compatible with Perfect Sound, ProSound Designer, SoundMaster and Data's ProSounder. Sampling rates up to 80KHz are possible depending upon the software. An audio lead is supplied for connecting to the headphones socket or line output of a radio, personal stereo, keyboard etc. Full instructions are included, and the mono version also has an E.D. (Digital) output for a public domain "Sound Workshop" disk is available which has demo versions of Audiomaster & Perfect Sound etc.  
MONO DIGITISER £27.99 POST FREE  
STEREO DIGITISER £37.99 POST FREE  
SOUND WORKSHOP DISK £4.99 POST FREE IF PURCHASED WITH DIGITISER  
ADAPTOR CABLE £2.00

EXTERNAL 3.5" DISK DRIVES

- 800 K FORMATTED CAPACITY
- THROUGH PORT
- VERY QUIET OPERATION
- SLIMLINE STEEL CASE
- LOW POWER CONSUMPTION
- MASTER 3A 3.5" DRIVE WITH ON/OFF SWITCH
- CHINGIN DRIVE MECHANISM
- MASTER 3A 3.5" DRIVE WITH ON/OFF SWITCH
- MASTER 3A 3.5" DRIVE WITH ON/OFF SWITCH

## AMIGA MONITOR & PRINTER LEADS

RGB TV & MONITOR LEADS  
We have leads to connect all AMIGAs to your TV or colour monitor provided it has an RGB input socket. All leads give a much clearer picture than using the AMIGA MODULATOR permit ALL 4096 colours to be displayed and include the video lead (to give stereo with stereo TV's)  
ORDER 1A FOR TV'S WITH 21 PIN EURO (CART) SOCKET  
EYES PHILIPS, PIONEER, SONY, GRUNDIG, NORMANDE, ETC. ONLY £9.99  
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OUR LEADS ARE GUARANTEED TO WORK WHERE OTHERS DON'T!  
LEADS ALSO AVAILABLE FOR AMSTRAD RANGE. PLEASE CONSULT US IF IN DOUBT!

ATTENTION 1901 MONITOR OWNERS  
Why not have your 1901 monitor converted to work with the AMIGA 6400/6401/6402? The performance is indistinguishable from the IBM 1064 monitor. After conversion, your 1901 will display all 4096 colours & stereo input signals. It's checked to be compatible with the C64 & 128. Conversion costs only £29.95 including lead & delivery (where you wish) or £33.95 including next day collection & delivery by courier. Please phone to arrange in convenient or collection.

OTHER LEADS  
AMIGA A400/401 LEADS — Connects 1541 etc to your AMIGA.  
There are several programs which need this lead.  
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A

spunboard diving, clay pigeon shooting, swimming, pole vault – and others – with lovely large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Control of your athlete can be complex so practice is recommended.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## SUPER SPRINT

Electric Dreams ● C64 £9.95 ● £14.95 ● Amstrad £9.95 ● Spectrum £9.95 ● Amiga £9.95 ● Atari ST £19.95

One of the better console conversions currently available. With up to three players all competing at once, the action is fast and furious and it will take a finely tuned car to complete some of the more tortuous circuits that appear later in the game.

★ ACE RATED 607

## THRUST

Firebird ● Spectrum £1.95 ● C64 £1.95 ● Amstrad £1.95

Terrifyingly sensitive controls and a large helping of real-life physics make this budget title an absolute must. Flying

down through the caverns of an enemy-held planet, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gun barrels without crashing into the tunnel walls. Tough enough as it is, but then you've got to make the return journey with a heavy load slung under your craft. Very nice, very addictive.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## THUNDERCATS

Elite ● C64 £9.95 ● £14.95 ● Spectrum £7.95 ● Amstrad £8.95 ● £14.95

The game based on the hit TV series/comic/plastic toy. It's a side-on view scroller that just oozes gameplay. Each of the game's 14 levels is a straight line dash from start to finish with a multitude of obstacles to avoid along the way. Graphically impressive and compulsively playable too.

★ ACE RATED 931

## URIDIUM

Hewson ● Spectrum £8.95 ● C64 £9.95 ● £12.95 ● BBC £9.95 ● £14.95

The price of resistance

of scrolling shoot-em-ups, blast the dreadnought and attacking ships while dodging around any large structures. Great metallic looking dreadnoughts and the smoothest scrolling you'll ever see put this head and shoulders above the opposition. A game not to be missed, especially now that C64 versions come packaged with the excellent Paradox.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## ZARCH / VIRUS

Superior Software ● Archimedes £19.95 ● Firebird £16 and 8-bit version Amiga £19.95 ● Amiga ST £19.95 ● Same 8-bit version under development.

STILL ACE'S highest rated game to date. A solid three dimensional shoot-em-up with such graphic perfection and tirelessly addictive gameplay that it becomes an instant classic. Now the 16-bit versions have arrived and they're just as good as the 32-bit versions. All that remains to be seen now is whether we'll be ACE rating the 8-bit versions.

★ ACE RATED 981

## CORRUPTION

Rainbird ● Atari ST £24.95 ● Amiga £24.95 ● PC £24.95 ● Spectrum £15.95 ● C64 £17.95 ● Amstrad £128 £19.95

This tale of insider dealings, infidelity and crooked business deals is unlikely to appeal to adventurers who prefer to wander through vast dungeon networks seeking treasure. But for those who are fed up with traditional adventuring, it's like a breath of fresh air. Superb graphics, great atmosphere and a nail-biting plot makes this a terrific game that grips from the start.

★ ACE RATED 920

## FISH

Magnetic Scrolls ● PC £24.95 ● Amiga £24.95

More gameplay than Corruption, better game design than Asterix, and not as quirky as The Pawn. This is definitely MS's best release since Gold Of Pharaoh. Good stuff indeed.

★ ACE RATED

## GUILD OF THIEVES

Rainbird ● C64 £19.95 ● Spectrum £15.95 ● Amstrad £128 £19.95 ● Amiga £24.95 ● Atari ST £24.95 ● PC £24.95

One of Britain's newer adventure software houses – Magnetic Scrolls – managed to produce a traditional treasure hunt with superb graphics and some very tricky puzzles. Powerful parser helps to create a convincing game world with humour and imagination.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## INGRID'S BACK

Level 9 ● Atari ST £19.95

A great follow-up to Gnome Ranger. Level 9 have really got to grips with the use of characters in their games and how to

program them very effectively.

★ ACE RATED 920

## JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Rainbird ● C64 £14.95 ● Spectrum £28 £14.95 ● Amstrad £14.95 ● £19.95 ● PC £19.95 ● Amiga £19.95 ● Atari ST £19.95

Level 9 Britain's oldest adventure programming family, have put together three of their classic releases, Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure and Adventure Quest in one bundle. The games have been updated with graphics and larger vocabularies and are as close to the original spirit of adventuring as you're likely to find.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## LURKING HORROR

Infocom/Medagene ● C64 £19.95 ● ST £24.95 ● Amiga £24.95 ● PC £24.95

Infocom's tribute to H.P. Lovecraft and the horror-fantasy genre sends you into a cold sweat as you discover something very nasty lurking beneath your college laboratory. Superb text-only game with location descriptions that defy you to play it after dark.

★ ACE CLASSIC

## POOL OF RADIANCE

US GOLD/JSI ● C64 £14.95

SSI, the strategy specialists were very brave to attempt to capture the complex concept of the AD&M system on a computer, but they managed superbly. An RPG influenced game that will appeal to not only AD&M fans but to anyone looking for an entraining game that will keep them playing for months.

★ ACE RATED 821

## TIME AND MAOIK

Mandarin ● Spectrum

£14.95 ● £14.95 ● C64 £14.95 ● £14.95 ● Amstrad £14.95 ● £14.95 ● Atari ST £19.95 ● Amiga £19.95 ● PC £19.95

This compilation of the Level 9 games, Lords Of Time, Red Moon and The Price Of Magic have all been reimagined with better parsing, bigger vocabularies and pictures added. Superb value if you don't already own all the games.

★ ACE RATED 816

## ULTIMA V

Origin Systems/Micropro ● C64 £24.95 ● PC £29.95 ● ST/Amiga to be announced

Astonishing level of detail in the role-playing influenced epic. Travel round Britannia braving the opposition and learn the magical, tactical, and geographical secrets he will enable you to defeat the forces of evil for underground. Superb rpg, great looking interest, and tough challenges galore.

★ ACE RATED 928

## WASTELAND

Electronic Arts ● C64 £14.95

Change around irradiated USA whooping mutant bunnies and biker scouts, this role-playing epic. The atmosphere may not be as good as the Bard's Tale series of games, but the extra dimension of strategy levels the cut, slash and spell scenario of the BT series way behind.

★ ACE RATED 921

## ZORK ZERO

Infocom. Versions due about now. Watch the space for price info. Highly enjoyable with a variety of challenges, make for instant addiction. A bit more character interaction would have made the real thing more. But no it remains one of the best games of the year so far.

★ ACE RATED

# ADVENTURES

Adventures have come a long way since *The Hobbit*. State-of-the-art graphics and powerful parsers enable you to communicate with other characters, and fully explore the world of your choosing. Add role-playing elements and you can see why this section of the software biz is the fastest growing area of computer entertainment.

## THE BARD'S TALE III

Electronic Arts ● C64 £14.95

The latest Bard's Tale game offers a number of refinements over its predecessors (all of which are still well worth buying a good look at). First, the graphics are better animated. Second, there are ranged combat routines

which take careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. Finally, the game is large and represents excellent value for money.

★ ACE RATED 920

## BEYOND ZORK

Infocom/Activision ● C64 £19.95 ● PC £24.95 ● Amiga £24.95 ● Atari ST £24.95

Infocom's attempt to muscle in on the role-playing market is a great success. Locate the fabulous Coconut of Quendor in a game that combines the wit and mystery of one of the world's most original software companies with state-of-the-art parsing and gameplay. Text-only, but with an on-screen mapping facility.

★ ACE RATED 902

# EDITOR'S LETTER

Letter from the Pink Pages Ed, who seems to have reverted to his childhood after enjoying a holiday in Ludlow...

## Dear Readers

First of all, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those of you who've written in, and particularly Stephen Morgans who had a few queries about my new Amstrad PC 2066 D 'twin floppy' VGA machine. Stephen writes "Could you please tell me more about this machine as it sounds very good!" Well, Steve, I hope you don't mind me calling you Steve. I feel as if we're good buddies already! It's a glorious machine. The VGA display is good as any Amiga, and though it's not as fast, it's almost as good at running games. Where it really wins through, though, is in the work department (yes! I mean work!) because it runs spreadsheets and accounts packages without hardly ever having a hiccup. Stevey-babes! What's not being too forward is it also writes 'Is this machine anything like my Amstrad CPC 464 or my Commodore C64?' Well, Steveywearysnookumpoops, it's not like your CPC cos it's a sort of creamy colour (probably called 'Midnight Sunburst in April' in a wallpaper catalogue somewhere) unlike you mean 'n moody grey CPC' still, it is an Amstrad which your Commodore isn't, so that counts the C64 out. Then again my Great Aunt Esther has an Amstrad record system, and it's NOTHING like that! Hope that's cleared a few things up (wish my spots would too, chikky!)

In answer to your last question, the sexy lady who models the ACE T shirt is called Angela (Sponge to her friends) and I'm sure she'd be delighted to, but she says she doesn't have a wardrobe.

Keep them letters coming, apparently I've got to earn my keep from now on!

P.S. My VGA machine is FAR better than any ST, Amiga, Macintosh or Cray, so if you've bought one of these 'yesterday' machines, you must be completely thick and stupid (not to mention quite a bit smelly too probably).

## EEEK! A SKWEEK!

Here he is, the star of Loricale Skweek game, and we've got 10 to give away. All you have to do is send us a tape recording of an innovative Squeak (and maybe a five) and we'll give a Skweek to the 10 best! Simple! Get your tapes into SKWEEK! ACE 4, QUEEN STREET BATH BA1 1EA. CLOSING DATE JUNE 5TH '92.



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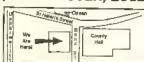
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## ACE/CRL COMPO WINNERS

Time to announce the results of the bobby ACE/CRL compo! We set you five Ludicrous questions (What's a Roman um? What's Grecian 2000 for? Who Built Hadrian's Wall? Where's Caesar's Palace? And what sort of Centurion carries a gun?) Of course, if you wanted to be really boring you'd have answered something like, a vase, dying hair, Hadrian, Las Vegas and a tank. John Hiltman from Norton wasn't so dull, however, he answered: About 2 Burens a week, helping us to elect US Presidents, Hadrian's builders, next to Caesar's garden and a smart one. The five runners up who receive a copy of the superb Carry On film Carry On Cleo plus a copy of the game (who answered with a mix of seriousness and humour) are: Michael Hilderby, Newton Aycliffe; David Sargeant, London; Matthew Trendwaite, Chertsey; Nookie Stowmarket; E Drow, Sutton. The 10 second runners up who each receive a copy of the Ludicrous game are: Ian Giesing, Malsom; S Reeves, Sokhul; Neil Lindsay, Bford; Rui Soares, Skelmorcleah; G Mann, Berkham; Simon Matthews, Gillingham (Kent); D Tattersall, Boreasley; M Roberts, Gaywood; A Lock, Dover.

# ACE RED HOT TIPS SECTION

Here it is folks! Red Hot computer tips to make your life much easier, more bearable, lively, interesting and pleasant.

Gluing the disks into the drives ensures they never pop out unexpectedly, thus frightening you and ruining a potential high score. **R. Hammar, Oxford.**

To avoid embarrassing yourself after you've bragged about how good you are at a game, only go and score something less than admirable, insist that anyone who watches you must wear a light-proof blindfold. **S.P.O. Cramp.**

Don't throw your broken computer away - remove the casing and fasten the innards to the side of your TV, then tell your neighbours to come and see your new 'introspective Resourcing, Pussling Genio-focussating Governor'. They are bound to be so impressed they'll probably want to buy it off you for about £456.70. **R. Hammar, Oxford.**

When you've bought a new game, remove all the covers, inlays and so on and copy them out on pieces of blank paper cut to the same size - if you include messages like 'Here you are, Berty, can

you test this out for us please? From Mr Taito, Japan in bright highlighter pens before putting them back in the case all your friends will think you've been sent personal copies of games to evaluate for very large corporations. You'll instantly win their praise and admiration and they would probably be far too scared to challenge you to a high score contest. **S.P.O. Cramp.**

If, like me, you're a parent who thinks your son spends far too much time playing computer games and not enough time cleaning his room, try writing a simple room-cleaning game for him to play on his computer - this may well get the message across that cleaning can be as much fun as playing games. **T.V. Optat, Chawton Mendip. (MRS.)**

When challenged to a high score contest by a friend, insist that you go first and that you can only play without someone looking over your shoulder. Once you're alone, hack into the game and give yourself

Rolling up two magazines (ACE works well) into two separate cylindrical shapes (see diagram) and securing them fast with heavy duty tape (first individually, then together) before making holes in one end and attaching string to them and tying them round your head, will provide you with a very cheap pair of 'Binoculmag's'. These are a stylish 'mood setter' for any serious gamesplayer. **W.Q. Goddaming.**



255 lives, then when you finally die, you'll have a very large score (don't tell your friend what you've done though). **S.P.O. Cramp.**

However stylish a mood setter and essential an accessory for the serious gamesplayer a set of 'Binoculmag's' may be, you must remember to remove them before going down to this corner shop as it's difficult to see oncoming traffic without swift and

exaggerated head movements. **W.Q. Goddaming Infirmary.**

When flocking into a game to give yourself 255 lives in a high score contest with a friend, DON'T pick a game that normally gives you 300 lives. **S.P.O. Cramp.**

Thanks to everyone who's sent in tips - we'd like to receive any more you may wish to pass on.

## NIGEL FROM RIGEL

By Dave Bowden





# ACE PRIZE PUZZLE 15

Set by Archie Medes

## TRANSFERWORDS

Transferwords is a new game in which four letter sequences are transferred into three letter sequences by the following method:

First, write down any four letter sequence, for example M N O P, and under each letter write its alphabetic position. Below this add together each pair of numbers and if this sum is greater than 26 then subtract 26. This will leave you with three numbers so finally write down the letter found at that position of the alphabet. These five simple steps are shown below:

Write down a four letter sequence)	M	N	O	P
Find its alphabetic position)	13	14	15	16
Add each pair of numbers		27	29	31
Subtract 26 where necessary)		1	3	5
Convert numbers back to letters	A	C	E	

This produces the word ACE from the initial sequence of letters. Taking the game one stage further, suppose that we require BOTH the four and three letter sequences to be acceptable English words or names. For example, we will find that RATS will become SUN and OATH becomes PUB. On a more personal note we find that ANDY turns into an ORC and that MAY is got from LAZY. Some results are quite surprising as we find an ARK in the LOCH, we get an ALP from LOWS and some IRS turn into an OAK!

The question is: how many can you find in all? List all of the words that you are able to discover on a sheet of paper, attach the entry form with the number of words that you are claiming, clearly marked. The sender of the longest list of what are adjudged to be acceptable words will win this month's prize.

### ACE PRIZE PUZZLE ENTRY FORM

I can find \_\_\_\_\_ words

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

COMPUTER OWNED \_\_\_\_\_

Send your entries to: Prize Puzzle 15, ACE, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1JH. Closing date June 5th '89.

# SOLUTION TO ACE PUZZLE 13

The treasure was beneath the 17th slab in the 29th row. The sum total of the digits on this and the surrounding squares is 63, the maximum that can be obtained on a 99 X 99 grid.

## SOLUTION

The program listing falls into two sections. Lines 100 to 190 create the numbered 99 X 99 grid while lines 200 to 240 evaluate the totals of each 3 X 3 group of squares. The information about each element of the grid, e.g. DIM G99 99. However, this requires enough memory to store information as each of the 99 by 99 squares, and as most machines may need up to 8 bytes to store each of these values, a total of 78K of memory would be required. To conserve memory a string array is therefore used, thus only ONE byte being required per element under 120K.

In the program, line 110 defines the initial values of the variables. It is the counting sequence, while X and Y represent positions on the grid. Each value of X is converted to a string variable to enable each digit to be taken in turn. These are then fed in order onto the end of the appropriate string in the array line 140. Once the length of this string has exceeded 99, line 150 transfers operation to the next and in the array and resets X to 1. At this point, this string is printed out so that it can be checked. A flag is set to zero at the outset and is used as a marker (reset to 1) when the value of Y exceeds 99 - i.e. the grid is filled. The resetting of this flag terminates this section of the program immediately lines 160 and 1800, even if it is reached through the loop 99.

The final part of the program computes the values of each 3 X 3 arrangement within the larger grid. A variable MAX is used to keep a track of each row 'maximum' score, these being printed out as they are found, together with their X,Y locations. The last set of values to appear will be the required result.

## THE LISTING

```
100 DIM G$99(99) REM CREATE & NUMBER GRID
110 N=1:Y=1
120 NS=STR$(N):FLAG=0
130 FOR F=1 TO LEN(NS)
140 Y$=MID$(NS,F,1):G$99(Y)=G$99+Y$
150 X=X+1:IF X>99 THEN PRINT G$99:Y=Y+1:X=1
160 IF Y>99 THEN FLAG=1:F=LEN(NS)
170 NEXT F
180 IF FLAG=1 THEN 200
190 N=N+1:GOTO 120
200 REM COMPUTE EACH 3 X 3 GRID TOTAL
210 MAX=0:FOR Y=2 TO 98:FOR X=2 TO 98
220 T=VAL(MID$(G$99,11,X-1))+VAL(MID$(G$99,11,X))+VAL(MID$(G$99,11,X+1))+
VAL(MID$(G$99,X-1,11))+VAL(MID$(G$99,X,11))+VAL(MID$(G$99,X+1,11))+
230 IF T>MAX THEN MAX=T:PRINT X,Y,T
240 NEXT X:NEXT Y
```

■ The first correct entry out of the hat came from Matthew Doyle of Wells, congrats Matt.

## NIGEL FROM RIGEL

By Dave Bouden





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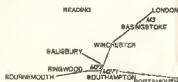
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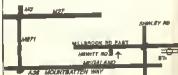
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# GAME DESIGNING

● Game designing – what does it involve? How do you do it? What are the pitfalls? Can just anyone do it? These questions and loads more are about to be answered as Jon Riglar brings us a mini series that unravels the mysteries.

Game designers, a rare bunch of idealists whose programming ability is often limited to "10 PRINT "HELLO MUN: GOTO 10": people who spend all day scribbling away inventing new space age worlds with silly alien geeks that inevitably end up being called Cybersomething: people who all on buses writing on the back of elegant packets and listening to Philip Glass for "inspiration": people who manage to carve themselves a nice little notch in the leisure software industry by using their imagination. So, could you do it? Let's trace the roots of game design and try to get a software house interested...

Starting out as a total unknown can be a daunting prospect, no doubt about it. There are several recognised methods to go about the process of creating your own game, and all involve a lot of hard graft and a smidgen of luck.

The first method involves sitting down and scribbling through your imagination to come up with an idea. This is where the first snag walks through the door. What happens if the trusty old grey matter blows a fuse and only responds to all requests with HELP! due to a few too many beers the night before? Well, this is hard luck but let's face it, software houses are not going to be ringing you up to start with, so you'll just have to come up with an idea no matter how long it takes. This task can be eased to a certain extent if you have been exposed to large amounts of software over the past couple of years. If this is the case, then you should know what style of games have already been successfully programmed and this will give you some pointers as to which direction to lead your thoughts

if only though it may be, you will have to invent an original AND commercially viable game before a company will even take a sniff. All this point you should be prepared to document your design fully, including full colour maps and descriptions: although there's no need to provide programmed demos.

Canvassing software houses is boring, disappointing and annoying. Look at your file and send photocopies to a publishing house which best suits the style of game. Do not send your designs to Fat Joe's Software Emporium who operate out of a garden shed, as you might well be rung. How can you protect your design? If it's your first attempt it's probably not worth paying to take out a copyright on the file (posting yourself a copy and leaving the envelopes sealed on arrival is no longer a valid method, so beware).

Another, cheaper and much more satisfactory way of guarding your interests is to send a confidentiality agreement to the software company. In this document, which should be typed,

photocopied and signed by both parties (with you keeping the original) make it clear that you want the company to keep all correspondence strictly confidential and that all work will be returned to its rightful owner upon completion of correspondence. State that you don't want the design photocopied, duplicated by hand, sited, delayed in any way without the prior knowledge and consent of the author and so on. Make the document legally binding upon signature.

Such an agreement is legally binding and although it may seem to be a waste of time, it could turn out to be a godsend if the software house turn out to be wrong. Use and try to nip you off. Once you get the signed agreement back in your mitts, send a SAMPLE of the design, say the first couple of levels, to the company. This way, if the company are interested they will contact you to see the rest. At this point they may well start talking CONTRACTS which is when you start talking MEETINGS and SOLUTIONS.

The above legal bullcunnery is all very well so long as the software house has actually responded to your original enquiry. It's a sad fact of life (Number One) that some of the major software houses won't. Others will but it may take them some time, so be patient. The whole process can be speeded up dramatically if you have

'contacts'. Contact is a word that may well send shivers of despair along the spines of normal punters. How are I going to establish contacts? you may wonder. Well, another fact of life (Number Two) – hope you're taking notes! is that for the most part, successful designers are often journalists supplementing their meagre incomes, programmers who do their own designs or people with 'mates in the biz'. People with contacts can often simply pick up the phone and out our half the correspondence by post. Such is life.

Designers who have no contacts and get no response from the software houses by post and find themselves presented with the 'I'm sorry he's in a meeting' messages on the phone may well want to chuck it all in at this point. If then perhaps the only direction left to go (apart from hard perseverance) is to believe a programmer down the pub. Become friendly with a programmer and you could even form a team, but remember that fact of life (Number Three) the majority of programmers today create their own designs, which is hardly surprising when you consider that around 15% of total payments for a game go directly to the designer with programmers often getting as little as 5%.

Next month find out the best way to lay out and present the design in a file for evaluation.



■ The MicroProse team caught redhanded, trying to run off with the ball.

## FUTURE GOALS SINK THE 'PROSE

MicroProse reckon they're a pretty mean bunch of footballers: so they challenged some of our lads to a game of five a side. The venue? Stroud. The date: April 13th. The time: in the evening. We'll hand you over now to our on the spot (penalty spot) reporter Bic Pontameter.

The match got off to an interesting start with MicroProse trying to field seven players against Future 5 five – it was decided that even 'Prose couldn't try this tactic, so one of their players had to join the Future team. Once the match was underway the 'Prose soon realised that trying to get a ball past demon goalie Otis Alderson (Amrad Achon's Art Editor) was going to prove tricky. They did manage it by convincing New Computer Express's News Editor and blinding striker Colin Campbell to shoot the wrong way and score an own goal. Trevor (Graham ACE's Art Editor) Steve Carey (Amrad Achon's Editor) and Richard Monro (ST/Amiga Format's Editor) all surpassed themselves in their roles of strikers, defenders, wingers and sweepers. Even when the red joined the 'Prose team, they couldn't stop the onslaught. Only the final whistle put a stop to MicroProse's humiliation with the final score resting at 13 goals to Future and a disastrous 3 for MicroProse. The following day all Martin Math (MicroProse's PR Manager and star player) could say was "We're sick as parrots Brian. We were completely outclassed by a team that deserved to win – mind you, we only practised by playing MicroProse soccer so we could only move in eight directions and make binaria shots." A feeble excuse Martin, and well you know it. Anyway, why not challenge our badminton team next? Or our table tennis, squash, formation drinking, chess or bollywoods teams.

■ The Future team celebrates a fine victory.





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Start me off from the very beginning and be gentle with mail All letters answered but remember - I am an absolute beginner so no complications, please! CPC 6128 Disk version. J. J. Griffiths, 9 Rhos y Gaer Avenue, Holyhead, Gwynedd, LL65 2BE

**Help offered with Zork 1, Zork 2, Zork 3, Beyond Zork, Enchanter, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker, Wishbringer, Deadline, Witness, Suspect, Ballyhoo, Seastalker, Outthrust, Infidel, Trinity, Slaircross, Suspended, Planetfall, Stationfall, Mind Forever Voyaging, Bureaucracy, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Linking Horror, Moonmist, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Hollywood Hijinx, Plunderer's Hearts, Sherlock Riddle of the Crown Jewels, Border Zone** Please send SAE to The Grue, 64 County Road, Ormiskirk, West Lancs L39 1QH, or phone 0695 73141 between 7.30pm and 9.00pm Mon - Fri.

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**I have a game called Forest of Doom, with its own book.** This is an adventure game for the C64 and I am having great trouble solving it. If any one can help then please write to me. I have a game called Mission on tape with no instructions or anything. Can any one help? Stephen Morgeson, 48 Hanbury well, Bexley, Kent DA5 2JJ

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# EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HAMSTERS, BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK...

★ Part two in our series of probably quite a few about animals.

Hamsters have been around for millions of years, but did you know that all pet Golden Hamsters are descended from one family which was discovered in Aleppo, Syria in 1930? Amazing but true. Although hamsters come in various colours it's still the Golden Hamster (*Mesocricetus auratus*) - first introduced in the UK in 1931 - that's the most popular. An average adult is around 15cm in length and like all rodents, the hamster must constantly gnaw objects to prevent its incisor teeth growing too long and becoming a hazard to its health. A hamster has excellent hearing but rather poor eyesight and the

animal's lifespan is quite short, usually between 18-24 months though many fail to make it through the first year. The Golden Hamster is by far the most common and all various have black eyes but there are three shades of fur. Normal, Dark and Light Cream Hamsters differ from Golden ones in that the coat colour is constant but the eyes vary and you can get Red-eyed Cream, Ruby-eyed Cream and Black-eyed Cream. Three fairly new varieties are the Dominant, Dark and Light Grey. There are also two varieties of Albino and our White Hamster.

The word Hamster comes from the German

word *hamster*, meaning 'to hound'. Best feeding time is the evening when Hammy is just becoming active (they have nocturnal tendencies) and an adult requires about 15g of food a day as well as a plentiful supply of fresh water. Hamsters eat assorted grains and love sunflower seeds (though don't give them too many because of their high oil content). To ensure a hamster's continuing good health, it must get a regular supply of greens as part of its diet. Cabbage, lettuce, water cress, slices of apple, carrot, swede and lump are all chopped with relish by the bundles of fun, and certain species of wild

plants are greeted with relish including Dandelion clover, chickweed and cow parsley.

Hamsters have a very short pregnancy term - between 15-18 days - the size of a normal litter being between 2-8, though litters of up to 16 have been recorded. Like all living things, hamsters are prone to infection if not cared for so always remember to wash your hands before and after handling, keep its living quarters clean and ensure it always has enough fresh food and water and never handle a hamster if you're suffering from a cold or have flu because you can pass the infection onto the animal.

## PBM CORNER

Latest release from the Alchemist's Guild is a game called Jetball. If you just said 'who?', then you probably don't know that the AG has been going for over a year now with a couple of games including the futuristic RPG, *Revenge Of The Many-legged Man-eating Mutant Tiger Hounds From Outer Space* (or *MTMHQS* for short). Anyway, Jetball's a hand-assisted, computer-mediated game based on an exciting futuristic sport. Because of their success, the AG are looking to take on some more GMs. If you fancy moving to Oxford and receiving a competitive but not high wage plus gaining some experience in the PBM field, drop them a line asking for more details (drop 'em a line if you want more info about Jetball too) at the following address:

Alchemist's Guild, P.O. Box 114,  
Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1DS

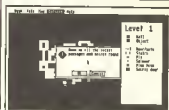
And by the way, Project Basilisk (P.O. Box 24, Sheerness, Kent) will have just launched a new game by the time you read this, called *Battle Crab*. Each game has 500 players, a sci-fi controlling two vehicles, with 1000 independent Zarg vehicles in each game. Start up packs cost £3.00, with a turn price of £1.20. Contact Project Basilisk for further info.

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# The BLITTER END

## MOVE OVER SIGUE SIGUE SPUTNIK



Aging industry figures – or should that be industry waistlines? – recently hopped off on a jaunt to sunny Spain muttering darkly about holding a conference to set the software industry to rights. Our sources reveal that it was little more than an ego-massaging expedition, an opinion backed up by this jolly snapshot of a group of conference attendees skiving off to pose as sixties popstars...

One of the quartet is our very own illustrious Editor, the two guys in front of the jeep are from Ocean while the guy in the strpy shirt was some peasant chauffeur hired for the day. Now here's a little Blitter competition. An ACE T-shirt is on offer together with a copy of Ocean's *Run The Gauntlet* for your machine – all you have to do is decide what you would call a band made up of these four characters if you had the misfortune to be their manager. Write to us here at Blitter End, ACE, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ and the wittyest entry to arrive before 5th June collects the pressie.

### OOPS CORNER

Biggest oops of last month (now blushing!) occurred on this very page. With a head full of sailors, Blitter piped Microprose's new game aboard as *Navy Moves* instead of *Navy Seal*. And of course Spanish software house Dynamic have been working on *Navy Moves* for yonks, and is about to release it any day now. It's a nautical apologies all round time...

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Eagle-eyed ACE readers of many issues' standing will no doubt recognise the man in this suit as our erstwhile Advertising Manager John Beales. Why is he posing behind a TV screen in a specially-made suit? To announce his latest business venture, that's why, me hearties.

Blitter End can now exclusively reveal that our John is in fact about to market sets of giant dominoes targeted at the hard-of-feeling. So far initial prototypes of the double one dominoes have been manufactured – hence the arrival of this stunning PR snapette. Within weeks double sixers should follow, with the rest of the set due by the end of the year...



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# HE'S BACK!

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